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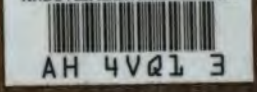
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THE CHRISTIAN CLERGY

OF THE

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THE CHRISTIAN CLERGY

OF THE

FIRST TEN CENTURIES;

THEIR BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE ON EUROPEAN PROGRESS.

Being the Hulsean Prize Essay for 1850.

BY THE LATE

HENRY MACKENZIE, B.A.,

SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Cambridge:
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1855.

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TO

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ONLY SURVIVING BROTHERS OF THE AUTHOR'S FATHER,

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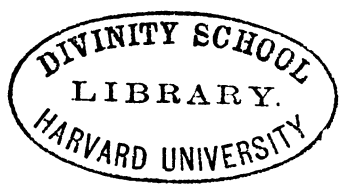

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CLAUSES *directed by the* FOUNDER *to be always prefixed to the* HULSEAN DISSERTATION.

CLAUSES from the WILL of the Rev. JOHN HULSE, late of Elworth, in the County of Chester, clerk, deceased: dated the twenty-first day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven; expressed in the words of the Testator, as he, in order to prevent mistakes, thought proper to draw and write the same himself, and directed that such clauses should every year be printed, to the intent that the several persons, whom it might concern and be of service to, might know that there were such special donations or endowments left for the encouragement of Piety and Learning, in an age so unfortunately addicted to Infidelity and Luxury, and that others might be invited to the like charitable, and, as he humbly hoped, seasonable and useful Benefactions.

He directs that certain rents and profits (now amounting to about a hundred pounds yearly) be paid to such learned and ingenious person, in the University of Cambridge, under the degree of Master of Arts, as shall compose, for that year, the best Dissertation, in the English language, on the Evidences in general, or on the Prophecies or Miracles in particular, or any other particular Argument, whether the same be direct or collateral proofs of the

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Christian Religion, in order to evince its truth and excellence; the subject of which Dissertation shall be given out by the Vice-Chancellor, and the Masters of Trinity and Saint John's, his Trustees, or by some of them, on New Year's Day annually; and that such Dissertation as shall be by them, or any two of them, on Christmas Day annually, the best approved, be also printed, and the expense defrayed out of the Author's income under his Will, and the remainder given to him on Saint John the Evangelist's Day following; and he who shall be so rewarded, shall not be admitted at any future time as a Candidate again in the same way, to the intent that others may be invited and encouraged to write on so sacred and sublime a subject.

He also desires, that immediately following the last of the clauses relating to the prize Dissertation, this invocation may be added: "May the Divine Blessing for ever go along with all my benefactions; and may the Greatest and the Best of Beings, by his all-wise Providence and gracious influence, make the same effectual to His own glory, and the good of my fellow-creatures!"

Subject proposed by the TRUSTEES for the Year 1850.

"*The Christian Clergy of the First Ten Centuries; their Beneficial Influence on European Progress.*"

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PREFACE.

THE unusual circumstances under which the following Essay is published require a few words of explanation. Henry Mackenzie was declared to be the successful candidate for the Hulsean Prize at the close of the year 1850. "On the first of March 1851", his mother writes not many weeks after his death, "he was summoned to "Edinburgh to attend the deathbed of his father, and "to scenes of complicated sorrow and distress, as well as "of long protracted and most exhausting anxiety: after "nearly four months of which, and five months previous "to his father's death, his own health completely gave "way under the pressure of sorrow and anxious watching, "and never rose again." The Hulsean Trustees accordingly granted him an extension of the period of twelve months usually allotted for publication: this indulgence was the more necessary, as he was most anxious to fill up in some measure what he felt to be a rough and provisional sketch by additional notes and appendices. "Till November 1852 he was unable, partly from illness "and partly from travels on the Continent in the vain "endeavour to regain health, to attempt carrying the "Essay through the press or preparing the notes. The

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" latter, as far as it has been accomplished, has been so " during eleven months of continually increasing illness " and weakness, with very frequent attacks of suffering " which brought him over and over again to the brink of " the grave": " during many of those months he was " actually too weak to lift those very books which he was " so anxiously reading." But his exhausting disease at length prevailed, and on the thirteenth of October 1853 he died peacefully and happily, in the twenty-sixth year of his age. This is not the place to speak of the worth which made him dear to so many friends. They also alone can know what results might have been hoped for from his quiet strength and rapid energy of mind; of which the present volume may convey to others some partial indication.

It remains for me to give some account of the welcome task entrusted to me, of preparing for the press the materials which he had collected for the illustration of the Essay. Many apologies are due to his relatives and friends, and to the Hulsean Trustees, for the considerable delay which has taken place in publication: want of experience in literary work, the pressure of other occupations, and above all the peculiar nature of the case will, I hope, be taken as some excuse. The manuscript placed in my hands consisted of 440 closely written quarto pages, containing notes and extracts from a large number of documents (chiefly epistles, chronicles, and biographies) bearing on the history of the first ten centuries, and in some cases (Bede's historical works, for

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instance) tolerably complete analyses *. Illustration of this Essay was obviously the leading principle of selection, but the manuscript contains a very large quantity of matter that can only have been intended for future use in other similar historical studies, the notes on Anglo-Saxon records being particularly full and interesting. It was however an obvious duty to exclude everything irrelevant to the actual text. It has been my object throughout to avoid expressing or conveying any opinions or inferences of my own, and I have therefore inserted no passages that did not seem to have some direct bearing on some statement in the original Essay. It is quite possible that valuable indirect illustrations have thereby been sacrificed, which the author himself might legitimately have introduced; but an editor is bound to make his labours as purely mechanical as the nature of the case will admit. As it is, I am unavoidably responsible for the particular application given to nearly every passage adduced in the

* The notes on modern books are for the most part few and desultory: there are none at all on Neander's and Gieseler's Histories of the Church and Guizot's Lectures on Civilization in France, which were largely used in the original composition of the Essay. A set of notes on Lingard's History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church were unfortunately mislaid and forgotten by myself till too late: but their most valuable contents had already been obtained at first hand from Lingard's own authorities. The references to Gregory of Tours would likewise have been more numerous, had not the notes on his Ecclesiastical History of the Franks been mislaid at the same time, before the whole of them had been examined.

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notes. In some cases mere transcripts, condensations, or references have been given: in others some faint indication of their bearing seemed necessary, and I hope I have not exercised an undue discretion in giving it. The worst but most inevitable defect is the absence of observations limiting or modifying the force of the authorities cited, in short the accumulation of miscellaneous historical data without historical criticism, in the strictest sense of the word: it must therefore be understood that the notes do not profess to prove and establish the text but to throw light upon it and exemplify it; and likewise that the fulness of illustration on any one topic bears no relation to its intrinsic importance but solely to the materials actually collected. It will be observed that the notes on the first twenty-one pages are much more elaborate than any that follow: these and these alone were prepared by the author himself, a few days before his death, and may be taken as a specimen of what the whole volume would have contained had he lived to complete it. All references have of course been verified and quotations collated, except a few from documents extracted in Ducange's Glossary, some of which from the imperfect method of citation employed would have required much search and consequent delay in publication without any adequate advantage: they are therefore given as they stand in the last Paris edition. A liberty has also been taken in the case of several Merovingian documents which the author had quoted in French from Guizot's *Collection des Mémoires:* the original Latin

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being accessible in Du Chesne and Couvenier, I have not scrupled to employ it, especially as M. Guizot (or the translator to whom he gives his name) has sometimes materially departed from the language of the text. Care has been taken to distinguish the original Essay from all subsequent additions. Every word has been printed exactly as it occurs in the manuscript copy sent in to the Hulsean Trustees. Some interpolations by the author himself in the text of the first few pages, which had been set up in type before his death, are enclosed in square brackets. The notes now inserted for the first time are distinguished by numerals, the original notes by asterisks, &c. These formed in some cases the most convenient receptacle of new matter, and in others it seemed useful to print in full passages to which only references had previously been given: all these additions are enclosed in square brackets, as are also a few trivial references, either, as it would seem, accidentally omitted or taken without verification from other authorities; which I have accordingly supplied. The analytical Table of Contents is likewise an editorial addition.

Had the author lived, it was his intention to have written a paragraph or two in explanation of the general scope of his Essay and its connexion with the "Evidences "of Christianity". As he appears to have spoken on the subject several times in 1850 and 1851 in conversation and by letter, the purport of his intended remarks can be safely stated in a few words. He wished, first, to uphold that view of history which represents it as a Divine drama,

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no single act or scene of which can be truly understood without reference to the rest and also to the entire plot; so that many circumstances, which to a prejudiced mind appear wholly evil, (and really involve evil relatively to their immediate subjects,) are yet necessary conditions of growth for future blessings:—next and more especially, to shew how completely the history of the Christian faith and polity has proved their power and fitness as instruments for working out that Divine plan among the discordant elements of the surrounding world, and has thereby attested their origin in the same Mind which conceives and accomplishes the whole range of human events. I hardly think he would have ventured to say that this argument, assuming it to be intrinsically sound, can by itself sustain the exclusive authority of Christianity. Probably he would have urged that it was not his province to deal with more than one branch of "evidence"; and further that a large school of contemporary sceptics have chosen to deny the historical benefits of Christianity which others are willing to concede, and that a vindication on this particular head is not the less necessary because it will not meet a different class of objections. This school, of which Michelet may be taken as a brilliant representative, is especially bitter in its slanders against the ancient and mediæval clergy, and to the clergy the author was bound in the present case to confine his attention. But he clearly felt, no less strongly than those whom he was answering, that, whatever may have been the sins of the clergy themselves, Christianity itself must

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stand or fall with this its characteristic institution, and that no excellence in its original idea can save it from condemnation if the verdict of history is against it. At the same time it is right to mention that he felt himself somewhat fettered by being limited to discussing the *beneficial* influence of the clergy. In a letter not long subsequent to the decision of the Trustees in his favour, after speaking with interest of Taylor's *Ancient Christianity*, which he had just been reading for the first time, and praising what he calls its "tone of unsectarian impar-
"tiality", he adds: "It is a curious contrast to my Essay
"in one respect, that, while he contrasts the ancient
"Church with what it would have been had it adhered to
"the primitive apostolic purity and kept itself unpolluted
"by the world to a degree which was after all impracti-
"cable under any circumstances, I contrast it with the
"heathen nations which had preceded it, and dwell upon
"the many blessings which amid all its corruptions it
"bestowed upon the world: so I take the bright view of
"Church matters, while he only looks at the dark and
"unlovely side." And his language is still more distinct in a letter written while the Essay was yet in progress:
"I almost think I should prefer having the subject and
"the necessary labour widened, so that I might have
"freer scope to speak my mind and vent my indignation
"where it would be seemly and pleasant so to do: for in
"the period of the later Carlovingians, for example, the
"advantages of the priestly system and intercourse were
"truly few and faint. However it can always be said

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" that the clergy were infinitely superior to their neigh-
" bours; and that, if they had not possessed the power
" they did, it would have been in far worse hands." Those who knew Henry Mackenzie will recognize these last few words as altogether characteristic of his mind: they well convey his hatred of all special pleading, most of all in defence of the Faith which was so dear to him, along with that trust in history as a guide to truth, which is happily taking possession of the more thoughtful men of England, France, and Germany. Indeed the pervading spirit of this his only literary legacy cannot be better expressed than in the words of St. Augustine, whose Confessions were his favourite companion, along with his Greek Testament, during the latter months of his illness; " Narratione autem historica quum præterita
" etiam hominum instituta narrantur, non inter humana
" instituta ipsa historia numeranda est; quia jam quæ
" transierunt, nec infecta fieri possunt, in ordine tem-
" porum habenda sunt, quorum est conditor et admi-
" nistrator Deus."

FENTON J. A. HORT.

Trinity College, Cambridge,
October, 1855.

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THE CHRISTIAN CLERGY OF THE FIRST TEN CENTURIES—THEIR BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE ON EUROPEAN PROGRESS.

Ὑμεῖς ἐστὲ τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς.—MATT. v. 13.

CHAPTER I.

THE advantages to be derived from the experience of past ages may be viewed in a twofold light, according as they associate themselves with the relations of man to his fellow men, or with the more mysterious and more elevating ties which connect him with his Maker. To the generality of mankind the former of the above courses of speculation will ever be the more attractive. It obtains the favour of the cursory reader, as being, or seeming to be, the more obvious and tangible of the two, and commends itself to the philosophical student as supplying him with abundant illustrations of those leading maxims of political science, which must, in one form or another, present themselves to every thinking member of a civilized community. It affords weapons alike for literary and political contest, and incites the partial to defend his favourite theory, the impartial to establish his impartiality. But such a mode of historical study, however necessary, or however instructive, can never lead us to as noble or as truly philosophical results, as follow from the latter of the courses we have above specified. The

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one, viewing human society in its divisions, arrives at results which may be, and too often are, tainted with all the imperfections whence those divisions have sprung; while the other, considering it in its unity, endeavours calmly to elucidate the mighty schemes by which the ultimate advancement of our race is worked out by a beneficent Ruler. For, assuredly, it is one of the sublimest problems to which the intellect of man can devote itself, to discover, among so many shifting scenes and conflicting tendencies, the constant operation of the Supreme Will. If to examine the dealings of Providence with individuals be a noble task, how far higher an object must it be to trace their effects on the destinies of nations. And in this, as in so many other studies, irregular and unsystematic as the materials may at first sight seem to us, yet a more attentive observation will in every case lay open to our view the regularity and perfection of the designs of Omnipotence, it will discover to us in the apparent evil of the present, the germ of some compensating good for the future, and teaching us to apply to our own times the lessons derived from the past, strengthen that confidence in the protecting care of Providence which is no less necessary in a society than in every one of its members.

But if from any portion of history we can learn these the most important of its lessons, assuredly nowhere are they presented to us with more striking distinctness than in the records of the Church of God,—of that Church which, in prosperity and in adversity alike, among dangers

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from without and advancing corruption within, has been constantly acquiring peculiar fitness for its great work of civilization and humanity; [which, in marvellous vision[1], appeared to Hermas in its earliest days as raised from the waters by angelic hands from a noble foundation of Apostles, Bishops, and Teachers, guarded by every Christian virtue; and which to his age, as to each succeeding one, seemed to wait for the fulfilment of all things in the speedy coming of its Lord[2].]

It shall be our task, then, to trace, during the first ten centuries of our era, the leading features of that mighty scheme by which the practical benefits of our religion were diffused through so many lands[3] and proclaimed in so many various tongues; [so that, even at the close of the second century, Tertullian could, with somewhat of his usual hyperbole, it is true, apply to the exertions of his fellow-presbyters the language of David in the nineteenth Psalm, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world;" and after repeating the national enumeration from the

[1] Hermas, *Pastor.* Lib. I. Vis. iii. c. 2.

[2] "Quando ergo consummata fuerit turris et ædificata, habet finem; sed et cito consummabitur."—*Ibid.* c. 8.

[3] Of the coming triumphs of its ministers we have no fitter foreshadowing than its early and rapid progress under the great Apostle of the Gentiles himself—who, in the words of Clement, *κῆρυξ γενόμενος ἔν τε τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ δύσει, τὸ γενναῖον τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ κλέος ἔλαβεν, δικαιοσύνην διδάξας ὅλον τὸν κόσμον καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως ἐλθών, καὶ μαρτυρήσας ἐπὶ τῶν ἡγουμένων.* [*Ad Cor.* 5.]—See the full argument in favour of the wide extension of the Gospel under St Paul in Howson and Conybeare's work, c. 27.

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Acts of the Apostles, could add: "In quibus omnibus locis Christi nomen, qui jam venit, regnat, utpote ante quem omnium civitatum portæ sunt apertæ, et cui nullæ sunt clausæ, ante quem seræ ferreæ sunt comminutæ, et valvæ æreæ apertæ." (*Adv. Judæos*, c. 7.)] We shall see our holy faith brought, in the persons of its ministers, into contact and often into conflict with civilized and uncivilized man, with "barbarian, Scythian, bond and free," at one time in almost apostolic purity, at another sunk in seemingly hopeless corruption, and shall learn the more to adore the wisdom of its Divine Head, who from such mutable and beggarly elements has added strength to the cause of unchanging Truth. But contenting ourselves with a lower and purely human ground, we shall find in the subject before us one possessed of no ordinary attractions. For at a period like the present, when the institutions of our forefathers are being scrutinized, and their origins investigated, with an accuracy before unknown, when the scope of history is every day becoming more ample and its materials more abundant, we can scarcely obtain a more interesting field of inquiry than the social elements and changes of that to us chaotic age, fraught with the undeveloped germs of our modern greatness. [Moreover, as, in the days when the professors of Christianity were but a handful among millions, the apologists of the faith could compare its votaries, dwelling in the world but not of the world, to the human soul[1], occupying the body, to give life, energy,

[1] Ἁπλῶς δ' εἰπεῖν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχή, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ

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and physical existence to every part of it; so, in each age of the Church, do we find the clergy bearing a similar relation to the nominally Christian world; sometimes tending to the ruggedness of the barbarism in which they were merged, more often, as we shall see, to the effeminacy of their old Roman associations; but still, though too often polluted and trodden under foot of men, clinging to the fulfilment of that parting promise of their Master, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."—To their successors, truly, in these seemingly more brilliant but not less tempting times, a lesson not to be neglected.]

And assuredly neither the enduring remains of the constitution of Rome, nor the vigorous but shapeless energy of invading barbarism, can present to us more matter of interest or of instruction than the progress and influence of the Christian clergy during the earlier ages of their history. For in order correctly to appreciate the workings of the Roman and Teutonic spirits on the later organizations of Europe, we must view them in combination with the third and most important element, by which alone was the one preserved and the other refined,—the polity of the Christian Church. And we cannot conceal from ourselves that the period of history which we are called upon in this Essay to survey is re-

Χριστιανοί. Ἔσπαρται κατὰ πάντων τῶν τοῦ σώματος μελῶν ἡ ψυχή, καὶ Χριστιανοὶ κατὰ τὰς τοῦ κόσμου πόλεις. Οἰκεῖ μὲν ἐν τῷ σώματι ψυχή, οὐκ ἔστι δὲ ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, καὶ Χριστιανοὶ ἐν κόσμῳ οἰκοῦσιν, οὐκ εἰσὶ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.—Auct. *Epist. ad Diognetum*, c. 6. Cf. Justin. Martyr. *Apol.* II. c. 7.

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plete with no ordinary difficulties to the inquirer; it includes ages differing from each other as well in the more obvious characteristics which lie on the very surface of the most superficial chronicle, as in the hidden tokens of moral and social progress or dissolution. We are compelled to bring under our glance Roman Europe and Germanic Europe, under nearly every variety of their changing forms;—the former, from the time when the traditions of the Republic were yet fresh to that melancholy age when the subjects of a degenerate sceptre looked back with regret to the comparative greatness and virtues of the later Cæsars; while in the latter we discern features of greater or less obscurity but of unvarying interest, from the first vague movements of the Teutonic hordes to the helpless indolence and final extinction of the despised Carlovingians.

But our province includes not merely an examination of the benefits which accrued to the several elements of contemporary society, whether Roman or barbarian, from the influence of the Christian clergy;—it leads us to the more intricate problem of tracing, amid the complicated framework of modern society and government, the great results of the foundations laid in the turmoil of the middle ages: for the historical student is inevitably conducted, by a thousand points of more or less remote analogy, from the undeveloped forms of those early days to the comparative perfection of our own times; and there are but few causes which shew themselves at work there, that cannot be discovered by their influence, be it of action or of reaction, now.

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But while it is necessary thus at the very outset to present to ourselves the magnitude of the task in which we are engaged, it is no less necessary that we should impose upon it its due restrictions. In the first place then, we must remember that we have to do, not with the effects of the Christian religion or morality considered by itself, a subject which would lead us into a far wider and deeper contemplation, but solely with those produced by the ministers of that religion, whether as individuals or as a corporation: and in the next place, we have to present, not every important result of their intercourse with the members of the body secular, but only those of them which to an observer freed from the distortions of prejudice by the lapse of so many centuries may seem to have been beneficial.

In reviewing, then, the benefits conferred by the clerical body on the world during the period before us, we shall class them under two heads:

(1) Those which make themselves perceptible in the social and moral life of mankind:

(2) Those which affect more directly the political state and progress of European nations.

We shall include under *the former* head all those blessings which the clergy, the salt of the earth, however much at times tainted by the admixture of secular interests and debasing passions, have imparted to man individually, or in his more immediate relations with his fellow-beings—the steps by which they have enforced a greater regard for morality and justice, and have united in one common

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bond the too often jarring elements of human society: under *the latter*, the more palpable because more historical consequences of the intercourse of the Christian clergy with the secular powers of the state. In other words, we shall consider the influence of the priesthood both in their external and in their internal relations, both as they appeared to the powers of this world and as they shewed themselves to the faithful under their banners.

Furthermore, it cannot fail to strike every student of history that in no equal period of the world's existence are included so many distinct distributions of national power, and so many and great changes of national characteristics, as during the first ten centuries of our era. Throughout those eventful years, the stage of history is occupied by every varied form of human society, from the yet stedfast empire of Rome to the roving hordes of Huns and Vandals; and again from the idolatrous followers of Attila and Clovis to the sumptuous paladins of the champion of the holy see. We are called upon to detest or admire every form of sceptred depravity or justice, from a Tiberius to a Charlemagne, from an Arcadius to an Alfred. Hence, though it has ever been the glory of the Christian Church that, while emperors and empires rose and sunk, she alone remained, in principles at least, if alas! not in practice, unaltered, we are compelled to a *second* partition of our subject, in order to meet the shifting relations of the spiritual and the secular powers. We shall, accordingly, divide the field of our researches into four main periods:—

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The first, extending from the propagation of Christianity in Judea to its elevation to the imperial throne with Constantine [CHAPTER II.]:—

The second, from the age of Constantine to the fall of the Western Empire and the establishment of the Ostrogothic power in Italy [CHAPTER III.]:—

The third, from the settlement of the barbarian tribes on the ruins of the empire to their union under Charlemagne [CHAPTER IV.]:—

The fourth, from the accession of Charlemagne to the close of the tenth century, or, as we might perhaps define it, to the age of Hildebrand [CHAPTER V.].

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CHAPTER II.

THE Christian faith was pre-eminent among all the systems, which commanded the respect of the learned or the unlearned among its early contemporaries, by this great fact in particular, that while it solved the mighty problem of the relations of man to his Infinite Creator, and prescribed ritual laws in accordance with those relations, it proclaimed, what none of its predecessors had attempted, a new era in the moral history of mankind. By bringing the mind of man for the first time into full contact with a perfect Ruler, it impressed upon him a true consciousness of his own imperfections, and he learnt, as no earthly philosophy could have taught him, to know himself, and from such an humiliating knowledge to derive guidance in dealing with beings like himself. And truly the need of a higher standard of action had been too long apparent, as well from the strange vagaries of would-be moral teachers, as from the gigantic corruptions which weighed so heavily upon a suffering world. The human intellect, debased from its pristine purity, and forgetful of its divine original[1], had long ceased to

[1] For the phraseology of Tertullian, forcible, as coming from his pen, it must needs be, can hardly have represented any religious truth recognized as such by his contemporaries.

"Te quoque palam et tota libertate, qua non licet nobis, domi ac foris audimus ita pronuntiare, 'Quod deus dederit', et 'Si deus ita voluerit'. Ea voce et aliquem esse significas et omnem illi confiteris potestatem ad cujus spectas voluntatem, simul et ceteros

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remember or to venerate that moral code once forming part of its very being. Even the noblest philosophers of the purest school, in their searching aspirations after the inscrutable connexion between the finite in man and the Infinite above, had merely refined, not renewed, the ethical theories of the age.

More than this they had accomplished nothing, for

negas deos esse, dum suis vocabulis nuncupas, Saturnum, Jovem, Martem, Minervam. Nam solum deum confirmas quem tantum deum nominas, ut, et cum illos interdum deos appellas, de alieno et quasi pro mutuo usa videaris. De natura quoque Dei, quem prædicamus, nec te latet: 'Deus bonus est', 'Deus benefacit', tua vox est." *De Test. Anim.* c. 2. See also *Apologet.* c. 17, where with more eloquence than faithfulness he describes the soul as "carcere corporis pressa, institutionibus pravis circumscripta, libidinibus ac concupiscentiis evigorata, falsis diis exancillata; cum tamen resipiscit, ut ex crapula, ut ex somno, ut ex aliqua valitudine, et sanitatem suam patitur, deum nominat, hoc solo nomine, quia proprio Dei veri. 'Deus magnus', 'Deus bonus', et 'Quod Deus dederit', omnium vox est. Judicem quoque contestatur illum 'Deus videt', et 'Deo commendo', et 'Deus mihi reddet'. O testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ! Denique pronuntians hæc, non ad Capitolium, sed ad cœlum respicit. Novit enim sedem Dei vivi: ab illo et inde descendit."

Similarly Cyprian, after reiterating in almost the same words the argument of Tertullian, adds, "Atque hæc est summa delicti, nolle agnoscere quem ignorare non possis." *De Idolorum Vanitate*, c. 9. But, as we advance in the field of our researches, we shall find to how very different and far sterner an awakening the mind of man throughout the Roman Empire was destined, than that which the too sanguine African Fathers fancied they foresaw. Very different, too, was the province of the ecclesiastical successors from what the Church leaders of the first three centuries must have pictured it to themselves.

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on the practice of their contemporaries they had been utterly powerless. It remained then for a heaven-sent teacher to reveal the only true method by which, in an age sinking into ever deeper depravity, the doctrines of a high morality might be at the same time perfected in theory, and, hopeless as it might seem to be, brought into operation in ordinary life. That such a result was as little to be expected from the religious enthusiasm as from the plausible philosophy of mankind will appear from the fact, that of the countless religious systems framed by ingenuity or superstition not one, whatever be the comparative purity of its ceremonial observances, lays the sure foundation of a healthy ethical code. It would seem to have escaped the notice of legislator or philosopher alike[1], that it was in the power of an upright priesthood, maintaining unpolluted, by precept and example, the only universally true motives of human action, to render the most enduring support to the creed they professed to uphold. Such a triumph was reserved for the ministers of a more holy faith, [for men, who as one of their own number could most truly declare[2], " philosophi non verbis sed factis sumus, nec vestitu sapientiam sed veritate

[1] How little the pagan ideas of the day comprehended the relations in which a Christian minister stood to his flock, may be inferred even from the refusal of the Smyrnæan authorities to surrender to his people the remains of Polycarp, " lest they desert the crucified one, and make a god of this man."—*Mart. S. Polycarpi.* c. 17.

[2] Cyprian, *De Bono Patientiæ,* c. 3; or, in the phrase of [Pseudo-]Justin Martyr, *Cohort. ad Gent.* c. 35: *Οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας θεοσεβείας πράγματα.*

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præferimus, qui virtutum conscientiam magis quam jactantiam novimus, qui non loquimur magna, sed vivimus[1]."]

This great work, accordingly, of the Christian clergy, by which they are placed in most decided contrast to the priesthoods which had preceded them, and in which they so constantly and so zealously fulfilled the commands of their Divine Master, will be the first to occupy our attention.

[1] The full force of this distinction did not fail, at a subsequent period, to occur to the mind of Julian, who in one of his pastoral letters [*Ep.* 49. and *Fragm.* pp. 296—304. ed. Spanh.] thus expresses himself as to the reforms he was desirous to effect in the system of the pagan priesthood.

"If they are guilty of any scandalous offence, they should be censured or degraded by the superior pontiff; but, as long as they retain their rank, they are entitled to the respect of the magistrates and people....The exercise of their sacred functions requires an immaculate purity, both of mind and body; and even when they are dismissed from the temple to the occupations of common life, it is incumbent on them to excel in decency and virtue the rest of their fellow-citizens. The priest of the gods should never be seen in theatres or taverns. His conversation should be chaste, his diet temperate, his friends of honourable reputation; and if he sometimes visits the forum or the palace, he should appear only as the advocate of those who have vainly solicited either justice or mercy. His studies should be suited to the sanctity of his profession. Licentious tales, or comedies, or satires, must be banished from his library, which ought solely to consist of historical and philosophical writings; of history, which is founded in truth, and of philosophy, which is connected with religion." (Quoted by Gibbon, c. xxiii.) This remarkable passage, coming from one of the avowed adversaries and imitators of Christianity, presents to us, as few others could have done, the secret views of enlightened heathens as to the ecclesiastical system, which they thus at length found themselves compelled to copy.

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The minuteness of parental sway and guidance entrusted by St Paul to the first bishop in Crete, when he enjoined him to "speak, exhort, and rebuke, with all authority*," was carried out to the full amid the primitive simplicity, and the yet limited congregations of his successors, as we may gather from the advice of Ignatius in his epistle to Polycarp; "Let the assemblies be continual; require every man by his name[1]."

Such, while the number of the faithful was small, and the clerical functions comparatively undefined, was the superintendence exercised over the Church by the immediate successors of the Apostles. Advancing years, as they widened the circle of pastoral action, weakened its intensity, and during the succeeding centuries, we look in vain for any similar strictness of ecclesiastical discipline[2].

* Titus ii. 15.

[1] c. 4: Πυκνότερον συναγωγαὶ γινέσθωσαν. Ἐξ ὀνόματος πάντας ζήτει.

[2] Yet we must admire the minuteness of the directions contained in a passage of the Apostolical Constitutions quoted by Lord Lindsay, *Christian Art.* I. p. 19: "But do thou, the bishop, be holy, blameless, no striker, not irascible, not harsh, but an edifier of the truth, a converter to righteousness, a giver of instruction, patient in enduring evil, mild in disposition, gentle, long-suffering, apt in exhortation, apt in comforting, like a man of God. And when thou gatherest together the Church of God, regulate the assembly with all discernment, like the pilot of a great ship, commanding the deacons, as the sailors, to arrange places for their brethren, as the passengers, with all care and decency. And first, let the house (church) be oblong, turned towards the East,...as it is to resemble a ship, and let the throne of the bishop be in the

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But while the exactitude of moral supervision, so characteristic of an early age, became necessarily impossible during the inevitable changes of the Church polity, yet the provision for the temporal wants of the people, early entrusted to the hands of the clergy, and fruitful of results on the temper and customs of so many succeeding generations, appears, from the very earliest period of their history down to our own times, to claim no small share of our attention. Among the many practical results

midst, with the presbytery sitting on either side of it, and the deacons standing by, clad in light but seemly raiment, for they are likened to sailors and oarsmen. And, by the provision of the deacons, let the laity seat themselves at the other end of the church, with all stillness and order, the women separately, and let them too be seated, keeping silence..... Let the presbyters exhort the people, one after the other, but not all, and the bishop last, as he who resembles the pilot....And if any one shall be found sitting out of his place, let him be chidden by the deacon, as by the pilot's mate, and led over to the seat befitting him. For not only is the church likened to a ship, but also to a fold..... Similarly, let the deacon keep watch over the people, that no one whisper or fall asleep, or laugh or beckon to another."—*Apost. Const.* II. 57.

The idea of the bishop as the pilot of a great ship, seems to be borrowed from the epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp, c. 2, where, according to the Syriac version published by Cureton, the phrase occurs, Ὁ καιρὸς ἀπαιτεῖ σε, ὡς κυβερνήτης ναῦν, καὶ ὡς χειμαζόμενος λιμένα, εἰς τὸ Θεοῦ ἐπιτυχεῖν. But see Cureton's note on the passage, *Corp. Ign.* p. 269, where a passage is cited from the [spurious] epistle of Clement to James, in which Christ is likened to the κυβερνήτης, and the bishop to the πρωρεύς. Ἔοικεν γὰρ ὕλον τὸ πρᾶγμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας νηὶ μεγάλῃ, διὰ σφοδροῦ χειμῶνος ἄνδρας φερούσῃ ἐκ πολλῶν τόπων ὄντας, καὶ μίαν τινὰ ἀγαθῆς βασιλείας πόλιν οἰκεῖν θέλοντας. Ἔστω μὲν οὖν ὑμῖν ὁ ταύτης δεσπότης Θεός, καὶ παρεικάσθω ὁ μὲν κυβερνήτης Χριστῷ, ὁ πρωρεὺς ἐπισκόπῳ, οἱ ναῦται πρεσβυτέροις, οἱ τοιχάρχοι διακόνοις. κ.τ.λ. [c. 14.]

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of the elevated gospel morality there was none which stood more prominently forward among the heathen nations than the frequent works of charity and love. The sacerdotal orders of Greece and Rome, wholly bent on mere ceremonial observances, were utter strangers to that paternal care of their flocks which formed so striking a characteristic of the Christian clergy; indeed, the ideas which we attach to the words 'alms,' 'charity,' and 'maintenance of the poor,' unknown to heathendom, rose with Christianity, and acquired strength by its extension.

[Humana ante oculos fœde quum vita jaceret
In terris oppressa gravi sub religione,
Quæ caput a cœli regionibus ostendebat,
Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans.
Si certam finem esse viderent
Ærumnarum homines, aliqua ratione valerent
Religionibus atque minis obsistere vatum;
Nunc ratio nulla est restandi, nulla facultas,
Æternas quoniam pœnas in morte timendum.
LUCRET. I. 56—59, and 101—105.

It is true that at a subsequent period, Julian the Apostate[1],

[1] In his own words: *Τί οὖν ἡμεῖς ολόμεθα ταῦτα ἀρκεῖν, οὐδὲ ἀποβλέπομεν, ὡς μάλιστα τὴν ἀθεότητα συνηύξησαν ἡ περὶ τοὺς ξένους φιλανθρωπία, καὶ ἡ περὶ τὰς ταφὰς τῶν νεκρῶν προμήθεια, καὶ ἡ πεπλασμένη σεμνότης κατὰ τὸν βίον;...Αἰσχρὸν γὰρ, εἰ τῶν μὲν Ἰουδαίων οὐδεὶς μεταιτεῖ, τρέφουσι δὲ οἱ δυσσεβεῖς Γαλιλαῖοι πρὸς τοῖς ἑαυτῶν καὶ τοὺς ἡμετέρους· οἱ δὲ ἡμέτεροι τῆς παρ' ἡμῶν ἐπικουρίας ἐνδεεῖς φαίνονται.*—Julian. *Epist.* 49. See too Neander's *Ch. History*, Vol. III. p. 64 (Bohn's translation), where he traces Julian's copying of the Christian *ξενοδοχεία* and *πτωχοτροφεία*, of the Church collects and oblations, of the Christian schools, *epistolæ formatæ*, and penitential system.

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in fruitless imitation of the institutions he affected to despise, endeavoured to connect with the system of his resuscitated Pagan priesthood establishments previously exclusively Christian; but, as has been forcibly remarked by a historian certainly not hostile to the philosophic emperor, "if these imaginary plans of reformation had been realized, the forced and imperfect copy would have been less beneficial to Paganism than honourable to Christianity[1]."] The insulated position of the Church during three centuries of persecution, necessarily fostering a desire after a more complete unity, ever tended to confirm the feelings which combined in one bond of true charity the rich and the poor, the influential and the lowly, among the brethren; and attached the whole body more closely to those pastors to whom the Lord had entrusted the care of his fold: "[while the pastors themselves, when their day of suffering came, found an ever ready temporal relief in the speedy contributions of their people[2].]" Hence arose,

[1] Gibbon, Vol. II. p. 300 (Ed. Milman).

[2] Thus Cyprian, *Epist.* 5: "Quantum ad sumtus suggerendos sive iis, qui gloriosa voce Dominum confessi in carcere sunt constituti, sive iis, qui pauperes et indigentes laborant et tamen in Domino perseverant; peto nihil desit, cum summula omnis, quæ redacta est, illic sit apud clericos distributa propter ejusmodi casus, ut haberent plures, unde ad necessitates et pressuras singulorum operari possint." Again, in *Epist.* 7, he offers his private means to supply the wants of the Church: "Viduarum et infirmorum et omnium pauperum curam peto diligenter habeatis. Sed et peregrinis, si qui indigentes fuerint, sumtus suggeratis de quantitate mea propria, quam apud Rogatianum compresbyterum nostrum dimisi." So we have the converse custom in Tertullian's treatise

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in the very infancy of the Church, the institution of deacons[1], and hence too the power exercised by the

Ad Martyras, c. 1, where we read of the "carnis alimenta, quæ vobis et domina mater ecclesia de uberibus suis et *singuli fratres* de opibus suis propriis in carcerem subministrant." And in the well-known passage, *Ad Uxorem*, II. c. 4: "Quis in carcerem ad osculanda vincula martyris reptare patietur? &c." Even Lucian, false and distorted as was the medium through which he viewed the Christian institutions, seems to have been well aware how much vigor and earnestness the whole system derived from the close union between the pastor and his flock. Thus in his tract *De Morte Peregrini*, [12, 13,] after describing the success of Peregrinus in acquiring the Christian doctrine, and placing himself at the head of the body of the faithful, with his consequent imprisonment, he adds: ἐπεὶ δ' οὖν ἐδέδετο, οἱ Χριστιανοὶ συμφόραν ποιούμενοι τὸ πρᾶγμα, πάντα ἐκίνουν, ἐξαρπάσαι πειρώμενοι αὐτόν. εἶτ' ἐπεὶ τοῦτο ἦν ἀδύνατον, ἥ γε ἄλλη θεραπεία πᾶσα οὐ πάρεργος, ἀλλὰ ξὺν σπουδῇ ἐγίγνετο· καὶ ἕωθεν μὲν εὐθὺς ἦν ὁρᾷν παρὰ τῷ δεσμωτηρίῳ περιμένοντα γραΐδια, χήρας τινάς, καὶ παιδία ὀρφανά,.... εἶτα δεῖπνα ποικίλα εἰσεκομίζετο, καὶ λόγοι ἱεροὶ αὐτῶν ἐλέγοντο, καὶ ὁ βέλτιστος Περεγρῖνος καινὸς Σωκράτης ὑπ' αὐτῶν ὠνομάζετο. Καὶ μὴν καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἀσίᾳ πόλεων ἐστίν, ὧν ἦκον τινες τῶν Χριστιανῶν στελλόντων ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ, βοηθήσοντες, καὶ ξυναγορεύσοντες, καὶ παραμυθησόμενοι τὸν ἄνδρα. ἀμήχανον δέ τι τὸ τάχος ἐπιδείκνυνται, ἐπειδάν τι τοιοῦτον γένηται, δημόσιον.....πεπείκασι γὰρ αὐτοὺς οἱ κακοδαίμονες, τὸ μὲν ὅλον ἀθάνατοι ἔσεσθαι, καὶ βιώσεσθαι τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον. παρ' ὃ καὶ καταφρονοῦσι τοῦ θανάτου, καὶ ἑκόντες αὐτοὺς ἐπιδιδόασιν οἱ πολλοί. ἔπειτα δὲ ὁ νομοθέτης ὁ πρῶτος ἔπεισεν αὐτοὺς ὡς ἀδελφοὶ πάντες εἶεν ἀλλήλων, ἐπειδὰν ἅπαξ παραβάντες, θεοὺς μὲν τοὺς Ἑλληνίκους ἀπαρνήσωνται, τὸν δὲ ἀνεσκολοπισμένον ἐκεῖνον σοφιστὴν αὐτῶν προσκυνῶσι, καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ἐκείνου νόμους βιῶσιν. A most singular passage, surely, not only as shewing us the limit of misrepresentation to which the great satirist of the age could subject the Christian body, but as laying before us, in a more especial degree, the light in which so utterly new a relation as that between the clergy and laity first presented itself to the heathen public.

[1] See Ducange's Glossary, in voc. *Diaconus* and *Diaconia*, where the progress and amplification of the temporal duties of the

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other members of the clerical body in disposing of the ecclesiastical revenues in support of their bereaved and poverty-stricken brethren.

To cite from the writings of the earlier Fathers their exhortations to this, the most practical of Christian virtues, would be an endless task; and their biographers sufficiently testify that they did not themselves neglect what they so earnestly enjoined upon others. Cyprian* accounts the omission of the customary tribute to the poor a sure sign of the grievous falling away from the purity of the faith; and in a letter† addressed to the bishops of Numidia, breathing the true spirit of Christian charity, he forwards to them a large sum contributed by the pious zeal of the Carthaginian Church to the ransom of the captive brethren among the barbarian tribes of the North of Africa[1]. The same church-father is presented to us by his contemporary biographer as engaged in a yet nobler task, as busied, during the period when a desolating plague ravaged his episcopal city, in ministering the means of temporal and spiritual support to his people

institution, especially in the Papal States, is traced down to the mediæval period: "Erant enim Diaconi isti, ut verbis utar Cujacii, *Ad Nov.* 3, '*ἀγαπῶν* ministri, id est, mensarum, quæ apponebantur egenis, viduis, orphanis, quæ convivia agitabantur domi, non in templo, adhibitis precibus divinis.' Erant autem ejusmodi hospitales domus Romæ in regionibus omnibus, quarum usu præcipuo exolescente, ipsisque dirutis ædibus, *diaconiæ* nomen ipsis sacellis et oratoriis mansit; a quibus earum præfecti *Diaconi Cardinales Urbis Romæ* postea dicti sunt."

* *De Lapsis*, c. 6, 12. † *Ep.* 62.

[1] See also *Epp.* 5, 12, 14.

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and to his persecutors alike*. [In like manner, when, during the reign of Gallienus, the plague, that so fruitful source of Christian heroism, was desolating Alexandria, we have a forcible picture of the contrast between the zeal of the clergy and the indifference of the heathen population, as drawn by the hand of Dionysius the bishop (Euseb. *H. E.* III. 22).

"Most of the brethren, through the excess of their love and fraternal affection, not sparing themselves and clinging closely to each other, bestowing all their care on the sick, regardless of themselves, but serving them most zealously for Christ's sake, with all joy exchanged places with them, infecting themselves with the malady which they derived from others, and discharging upon themselves the sufferings from which they relieved their neighbours. And not a few, after tending others and saving their lives, brought death upon themselves, transferring it from their patients; and so we lost many of the most useful of our brethren, and certain of the presbyters and deacons and of those held in high esteem by the people; so that such a death, being the result of much piety and earnest faith, seemed hardly to fall short of martyrdom. And many, who with upturned hands grasped and pressed to their bosoms the corpses of the saints, who cleansed their eyes, closed their lips, bore them on their shoulders, and laid them out for burial, clinging to them, twining their arms round them, and

* *Vita Cypriani*, (c. 9) by Pontius Diaconus.

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bestowing upon them due ablutions and obsequies, soon themselves underwent a similar lot.

"But with the heathens everything was quite different; they drove from them all those who were but beginning to fall sick, they shunned their dearest friends, and even cast them half dead into the streets, shrinking with horror from the unburied dead, turning away from that transmission and community of death, which with all their contrivances they found it no easy matter to avoid[1]."]

We may form some idea of the unwearied energy and zeal, with which the clergy supplied the increasing wants of their destitute flock during the social disorganization of the decline of the empire, from the fact, that Cornelius, bishop of Rome in the middle of the third century, assigns to a church containing, from the bishop to the ostiarii, scarcely more than 150 clerical members the maintenance of 1500 widows and orphans alone*; so energetic was

[1] See too Neander, *Ch. History*, I. p. 358. Most striking, at a later period, was the very title bestowed upon the clerical successors of these men, *parabolani*, ἀπὸ τοῦ παραβάλλεσθαι τὴν ζωήν, men reckless of their lives, whose solemn chant and measured tread are to this day so well known to every one who has crossed the gate of an Italian town. It may be made a question how far the sudden and utter extinction of this and similar church-orders may not have been one of the principal contributing causes to the rapid spread of the plague through the countries of the Levant. But such inquiries belong more strictly to a later period of our investigations.

* See Cornelius, *Ep. ad. Fab.* [c. 3] ap. Routh, *Reliq. Sac.* III. [pp. 23, 24].

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still the operation of that mutual love which the parting commands of the Great Shepherd of the fold had enjoined upon his disciples. What a contrast must not even the most bigoted of pagan eye-witnesses have drawn between the priests of the ancient superstition, anxious only to increase their own revenues by the credulity of their people, and the yet untainted ministers of Christ, supporting, even amid the uncertainties of external persecution, their still more suffering brethren! But a fuller display of the results of these clerical virtues was reserved by Providence for a more necessitous age; and we shall find the charity thus first practised in the early Church accomplishing in succeeding centuries the yet nobler task of relieving, so far as human instrumentality could relieve, the disasters of the expiring empire of Rome.

But while we see the clergy of the early ages occupied in laying, amid the fires of persecution, the good foundation of charity and pure works, which was to exalt them so far above many of their degenerate successors, and while we admire the influence they thus exerted on the world without, we must not omit to trace more particularly the consequences of the same principles within the precincts of the Church itself: and it must be observed generally that, in estimating truly the standard of morality in the Church at any period, we must so far make allowance for the promptitude of mankind to learn lessons of evil, as to compare the ecclesiastical discipline of the age, not only with the pure doctrines and perfect

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models presented by the Apostolic Church, [and with the faultless precepts of its Founder,] but also with the condition of the contemporary secular society: for never, not even in its most irreproachable state, was the Church of God so thoroughly sifted by the force of truth, and placed on so remote a moral elevation, as to be uninfluenced by all the attractions of the world below. Judged by such a rule as this, how surpassingly brilliant, how far beyond all praise, do the virtues of the early clergy and people appear, during an age in which corruptions and vice ruled unrestrained! Wherever in the heathen world the name of Rome was heard, the ministers of a despised creed shone as true lights among men, and that not only in contrast with the surrounding gloom, but even when compared with the vaunted splendour of succeeding [and nominally Christian] centuries. It is true that men who delight to trace in the whole chronicle of the world the continued onward progress of mankind in religious as well as in intellectual advancement, [and ever to attribute to some occult tendency (from us, in these less prosperous days, unfortunately veiled!) towards ultimate perfection what a more vulgar historical philosophy ascribes to the beneficent agency of a Providential scheme,—it is true that such men, ever willing to contrast the imagined lesser brilliancy of a more remote with the so-called splendour of a less distant period,] may point to the vagaries of Alexandrian philosophy or the pernicious fanaticism of Phrygian heresy:—we may with more justice assert the ordinary practice of the Church in matters of discipline, as

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convincing proof that the high standard of clerical morality was far from being one of theory alone[1].

During the whole course of the three centuries, which occupy our more immediate attention, we discern the clergy engaged in a constant and successful struggle against the prevailing depravity of the age—[a struggle, whose progress and results, often hardly to be appreciated at the time, appear most prominently at a subsequent period in the improved legislation of Constantine and Justinian;—] we see one Pagan corruption after another victoriously attacked by these true soldiers of the Cross, and the line of demarcation between the Church and the world without becoming every day more and more clearly defined. The faithful, as their numbers and estimation increased, found themselves in perpetually new relations with those whom they looked upon as the sworn servants of the powers of darkness. The piety and judgment of their spiritual guides are frequently in requisition to assist them in some new difficulty, or preserve them in some unheard-of temptation;—[whether, as in the very earliest of the Christian writers, the depth of the prevailing corruption is rather occasionally hinted at than systematically depicted;—or, as in the more fervid pages of Cyprian and Tertullian, every shade of the surrounding blackness is portrayed till the meanest of the Christian virtues acquires redoubled dignity by the contrast.]

There is no subject on which the Latin Fathers bestow more earnestness or eloquence than on their frequent

[1] Cyp. *Ep.* 4.

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exhortations to abstain from all share in those theatrical exhibitions which were established wherever the Roman sway was acknowledged. Not only was the Christian disciple to avoid gladiatorial shows, to abolish which, in a less hopelessly corrupt age, a moral code of no such scrupulous severity as that of the Gospel might have sufficed, but his foot was on no occasion to be polluted by entering the accursed precincts of the amphitheatre. The most learned and most energetic of the early Fathers* has brought into play all his learning and all his energy to prove the idolatrous origin of amphitheatrical sports, and to lay before his readers all the heathenish and unbridled passions invariably excited by the crowded arena. Cyprian†, on the other hand, turning away the attention of his people from such vain, earthly frivolities as these, exhorts them to fix the spiritual glance on that more illustrious contest, where the race of immortality is run by the competitors for a more enduring than any earthly kingdom; where, instead of the pomp of curule magistracy and the multitudes of an assembled nation, the spectators are the Lord of all himself, with the innumerable company of angels, and the assembly of the just made perfect.

This latter passage is but one instance out of many we might produce, from which we learn how well those great leaders of the Church, men of action as well as of thought, knew how to divert into evangelical channels,

* Tertullian, *De Spectaculis, passim.*

† Cyprian, *De Opere et Eleem.* p. 244, [cc. 21, 22. ed. Baluz.]

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without extinguishing, an activity and enthusiasm so long misdirected, and from an instrument of so much past evil to prepare stores of future good.

But it was not merely by vague declamation that the purity of the Church was preserved; for the violation of such paternal injunctions was visited with ecclesiastical penalties[1]; and it was an universal rule of canonical discipline that no one who performed the functions of a "lanista"* was to enjoy the privileges of a member of the Christian body[2]. The same severe teacher, in the treatise we have just quoted, strives to disabuse his readers of the fatal idea which would limit idolatry to the mere bowing down before graven images, and repudiates that pliable morality which permitted members of the Christian

[1] Thus Cyprian (*Ep.* 4), in answer to Pomponius, who had consulted him and the other bishops as to certain virgins and deacons guilty of incontinence, after quoting passages to shew the heinousness of the crime and its foulness as adultery to the Divine husband, advises that the erring persons should perform full penitence, and not be re-admitted to the Church till after sufficient evidence of their having forsaken their evil courses, and the lapse of a considerable period of repentance. He also dwells on the duty of those in authority in the Church to despise the strictures of men, and act with a single eye to the glory of God.

* Tertullian, *De Idololatria*, c. 11.

[2] Thus Cyprian (*Ep.* 2), having been consulted by Euchratius, as to whether he should admit to the Communion a certain actor and theatrical teacher, orders his exclusion, and, in case of his pleading poverty, desires that he be supported from the church-funds;—they not sufficing, he might be transferred to Carthage for support.

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Church to gain a livelihood by pandering to the requirements of Paganism. "Tota die ad hanc partem zelus fidei perorabit, ingemens Christianum ab idolis in ecclesiam venire; attollere ad Deum Patrem manus matres idolorum; his manibus adorare, quæ foris adversus Deum adorantur; eas manus admovere corpori Domini, quæ demoniis corpora conferunt*." The horror which he proceeds to express against servants of the Lord who devoted themselves to science, literature or commerce, was shared by all the stricter party in the Church: and however unsuited such sentiments may be to those later times into which unthinking zeal has transplanted them, it is evident that in those perilous days such (as it would now be called) fanatical severity tended not a little to widen that salutary gulf which was fixed between the faithful few and the unbelieving many.

It was the same strict and scrupulous morality (repulsive to so many of our own day, who can hardly avoid identifying it with that merciless intolerance, the offspring of its combination with the "secular arm" at a later period) which introduced the severity of the canons against the lapsed[1]. The opinion of the most reasonable party in the Church on this much-disputed question may be found expressed in a letter of the Roman clergy to Cyprian†; "Adeant ad limen ecclesiæ, sed non utique

* *De Idololatria*, c. 7, &c.

[1] Instances of this severity may be seen in Cyprian, *Epp.* 15, 16, 17, 20, 27.

† Cypr. *Ep.* 30. [c. 7.]

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transiliant. Castrorum cœlestium excubent portis, sed armati modestia, qua intelligant se desertores fuisse. Resumant precum suarum tubam, sed qua non bellicum clangant[1]." These military metaphors are not without their full signification; for the zeal with which these leaders of the faithful marshalled their followers under the banner of the Cross, the scrupulous attention with which they bound them by the solemn "sacramentum" to the great Captain of their salvation, and the care with which they secured their union into one compact mass, can be compared to nothing so aptly as to the indispensable precautions with which an experienced chief leads forth his army, confident of victory, while not unmindful of the means to secure it.

But the barrier of reiterated exhortations and denunciations, with which the Church encompassed the laity, was as nothing to that with which she secured the unstained purity of her ministers. Errors, venial in the former, excluded the latter for ever from that communion of the saints on earth, wherein consisted at once their privilege and their responsibility. Indeed it was in full accordance with the general scope of ecclesiastical doctrine and practice, that, as the great body of believers, who had been admitted by Divine grace to a knowledge of the truths of the Gospel, were bound by more stringent laws than those of the world without, so the more favoured band, who were honoured by yet closer

[1] For other examples of moderation in the treatment of the lapsed by Cyprian and others, see his Epistles, 8, 23, and 25.

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communion with heaven, and to whom were committed the deeper mysteries of the Faith, should live among the people of God as the latter did among the unbelievers. It was reasonable, they argued, that men who were as angels upon earth, and whose ministry exalted them, while yet among their flocks, to the mansions of the heavenly places, should ever live as in the more immediate presence of the invisible world*. Accordingly the pardon gradually vouchsafed to such laymen as fell away in the day of trial was sternly refused to erring presbyters; they were indeed readmitted into the Church, but all approach to the altar was denied them. They were for ever deprived of their holy functions, and reduced to the condition of laymen†.

Pursuits[1] and amusements from which the devout people were not excluded, were looked upon as pernicious to the scrupulous sanctity of the priestly character. Was the Christian layman required to exhibit every outward token of inward purity of thought? They more. Were the believers forbidden to commit such acts as might

* See Chrysostom, *de Sacerdot.* iii. c. 4, quoted by Bingham, B. VI. c. 2. [§ 1.]

† See Cyprian, *Ep.* 67, where he cites the opinion of Bp. Cornelius regarding lapsed clergymen.

[1] Geminius Victor having named Geminius Faustinus, a presbyter, trustee to his will, Cyprian (*Ep.* 1), in accordance with a decree of a late council, reproved the practice of thus drawing priests from the service of the altar, and desired his clergy to deprive Geminius Victor, as the council had decreed, of the usual services for the dead.

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even bring them into suspicion with the world! They more. Was a Christian layman urged to forego pleasures which united him to earth, and drew his thoughts away from heaven? The clergy were compelled to a yet severer self-discipline. Each labourer in the vineyard of the Lord, as he entered on his holy functions, was made to feel that he was enlisting in a band no less distinguished from the world without by the excellency of its moral than of its ceremonial observances. He was kept in perpetual remembrance of the Apostolic charges by the strictness of subsequent enactments; he knew that, as to him much was given, of him should much be required—and that if from each individual convert were expected all the duties of a brave soldier of Christ, he was to be at once a teacher, an example, and a conqueror.

We have already found evidence of the integrity of the early clergy as spiritual teachers and rulers; another not less convincing proof of the excellence of their practice as well as of their principles may be seen in the power they exercised over the temporal concerns of their people. The general tendency to avoid any unnecessary intercourse with pagan authorities, as well as the doubtful interpretation of an expression of St. Paul*, induced Christian litigants in many cases to submit their disputes to the award of their bishop†; and while every secular official, from the occupant of the curule chair to the meanest of his lictors, was involved in the most polluting corruption,

* 1 Corinthians vi. 4.

† See Bingham, *Orig. Eccles.* B. II. c. 7. §§ 1, 2.

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while the provincial tribunals dispensed anything rather justice to their victims, the verdict of an ecclesiastical functionary was looked upon as a decision from which appeal was fruitless. Amid knavery and violence compared to which that of Verres was tolerable, he manifested a precise morality which even the great accuser of Verres would have held to be fastidious.

We have thus far considered more particularly the moral influences of the doctrine, discipline, and example of the Christian clergy. Taking a more general view of the period before us, it at once strikes us as a remarkable fact, that the onward progress of the faith, which no one who compares the first with the fourth century can doubt, was owing not so much to the propagating activity of its teachers as to the silent influence excited by the energy and regularity of the ecclesiastical organization. We look in vain for any of the earnest missionary zeal which might have found its model in St. Paul, and which succeeding generations learnt to admire in Boniface. The first three centuries of the Church's history were so emphatically ages of internal stablishing and moral discipline, that even the terrors of reiterated persecution, originally instrumental in scattering the truth from Judea throughout every civilized land, failed of removing the ancient Churches from their existing seats. The exertions of the clergy were spent in consolidating and perfecting what already stood, not in laying the foundations of new edifices; and it was well that it should be so; since it accorded admirably with

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the whole Providential scheme, as we can now discern it, for the onward progress of the faith, that the powers of a devoted ministry should be employed in forming, amid the comparative repose of the empire of Rome, a system destined to be productive of so many blessings in the succeeding centuries of turmoil and convulsions.

It is true that in too many of the institutions and customs to which we have alluded, are plainly to be discerned the first germs of overwhelming and pernicious abuses; but we can scarcely be justified in attributing to the primitive clergy of the second and third centuries consequences whose true origin is to be found in the social corruptions of the middle ages; we ought, on the contrary, to rejoice that so intellectual and so practical a body of men should have been engaged in founding a system so well calculated to further the kingdom of God in their own days and in those of their children. A more minute inspection will often convince us that in the early progress of what to us, looking at them as we do through the prejudices of so many centuries, may appear to be unmitigated abuses, the guiding hand and watchful omniscience of the Great Head of the Church may be discerned, preparing it for the emergencies of its coming destiny.

But before we turn away from the consideration of the beneficial influence of the clergy on the members of the Church, we may notice another less direct, but still important mean by which their authority was heightened, and the effect of the purity of their example in some

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measure enhanced. Whatever may be the exact opinion we may form, from the writings of the early Fathers, of the weight of the popular voice in Episcopal elections, we may be assured of this, that in no case did a nomination of so holy an office take place without the consent, more or less formally expressed, of the great body of the people, prior to the consecration of him who had been named, it might be, by the clerical body alone; and whatever may have been the steps of the process, we may well believe that a lively interest was awakened in the minds of the faithful*, regarding one who was thus in a measure their own choice. It is one of the earliest lessons we learn from the experience of life, that self-imposed obligations are the most binding and the most enduring; and we meet, in the chronicles of nations, with perpetually recurring evidences of the fact that men bow down more readily and willingly before an image of their own erection than before one to whose elevation they are strangers, or which they venerate at the beck of a supreme authority. Accordingly, the whole sacerdotal order, and above all the Bishops, of the early Church found themselves in possession of a moral and intellectual sway, resting not only on their own intrinsic claims to respect, but on the self-complacency, as we may style it, of those by whose suffrages they had risen[1]. The self-love of man often

* See Bingham, *Orig. Eccles.* B. IV. c. 2.

[1] Thus Cyprian (*Ep.* 14), writing from exile to the presbyters and deacons, professes it to be impossible for him to act alone without the "plebs" in important Church affairs. Compare *Ep.*

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delights in humbling itself before that which he has himself exalted, and in honoring, in the pre-eminence of another, the supremacy of his own judgment: and we can hardly imagine that the enthusiastic multitudes, whose acclamations raised Ambrose and Martin* to the Episcopal seats of Milan and Tours, would be willing to impugn the authority of prelates whose imperfections would have been chargeable solely on the precipitation of their elections.

Such, then, are some of the principal means by which the worthy followers of the Apostles dispensed the blessings of the Gospel to a world lying in wickedness: by which they not only instructed nations long destitute of all religious or moral guidance to look up to purer precepts and higher examples than the earth afforded, but accustomed them to become active members of a vigorous and self-governing community, in the very midst of the most hopeless and aimless society with which the world was ever cursed.

Before we pass to a consideration of our *second* head, and view the relations of the clerical body to the world without, we may give a few words to a subject which it seems advisable, in this and our future chronological sections, to include under this division—the effect of the

19. "Hoc et verecundiæ et disciplinæ et vitæ ipsi omnium nostrum convenit, ut præpositi cum clero convenientes, *præsente etiam stantium plebe, quibus et ipsis pro fide et timore suo honor habendus est,* disponere omnia consilii communis religione possimus."

* Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini,* [c. 7], quoted by Bingham, B. IV. c. 1. Sec. 3.

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theological studies and writings of the time on the literature and philosophy of a degenerate age.

To dilate on the merits or demerits of countless ecclesiastical disputants, to particularize each shifting form of ingenious heresy, or to enumerate the goodly catalogue of Champions of the Faith, each armed for his own peculiar warfare, would be far to exceed our present limits or intentions. After the lapse of so many centuries, we may look back on some of these temporary discussions with far other sentiments than those of regret, and rejoice that, as the Church was taught the advantage of watchful discipline by persecutions from without, so she learnt the necessity of a yet more earnest solicitude by what might seem to be tribulation from within. It is assuredly not the least of the many blessings conferred upon humanity by the sacerdotal order of the first three centuries that it produced in the western lands so many stedfast advocates of ecclesiastical discipline and the seemly purity of Christian life, or that in the less practical regions of the East it included within its pale such zealous defenders of true doctrine alike against open enemies and against the more dangerous approaches of scepticism and false philosophy;—that the system of the Truth is maintained by the energetic rhetoric of a Tertullian, and by the learning and exegetical skill of an Origen. It would be an interesting but laborious task to trace, through each succeeding generation of Christians, the good fruit of the seed sown by the penetrating intellects and exemplary integrity of such men as these.

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And we must not forget that much of the intellectual brilliancy of our own day is to be primarily referred to the torch of Divine Truth, so zealously raised by these the Fathers of our Church, and from them handed down, —through puny and unworthy hands, it may be,—to an age which too often affects to despise the sources whence much of its real greatness flows.

But even to the merely secular student the theological labours of the early clergy, especially in the Eastern portion of the Empire, must be matter of enduring gratitude; for the perusal of the works of Greek philosophy, which in their own land was becoming obsolete with the failing vigour of the nation, and in Rome had long succumbed to the practical tendencies of the people, received a new impulse from the theologic rancour of contending orthodoxy and heterodoxy. It is indeed true that the consequences of excessive religious philosophizing were as baneful in those days as in our own; that the words and arguments of the academic school were travestied at pleasure by contending theorists, that even such a man as Justin* could find in the dialogues of Plato an enunciation of the doctrine of the Trinity, and that the phrases and the philosophy of the Timæus† were looked upon by professing Christians as scarcely below inspiration. But both the so-called Platonists and their opponents,

* See Gieseler, *Ch. Hist.* [Per. I. Div. ii.] c. 3. § 52, note [6, 7.]

† See p. 41, where the idea of a δημιουργός is introduced; and p. 36, for the dualistic theory, so prevalent among his Alexandria disciples.

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though they mangled that great teacher in their own writings, maintained his in all their purity; and the preservation, through so many ages, of the masterpieces of Greek philosophy must be considered as in a great measure owing to their early association with the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion.

In conclusion, to the merits of the early clergy we must assign this unrivalled praise, that amid an universally decaying literature, among nations buried in ignorance and indifference save when the weak remnants of the old Pagan schools retained sufficient life to be hostile to the truth, they restored ethical philosophy, and turned the minds of men from the outward things of sense to look upon the realities of this life, and the great features of this our present state as exhibited by the prospective light of that which is to come. Plato and his illustrious disciple had taught the inseparable connexion of ethical and political philosophy: *they* directed the attention of their worthy disciples to the city whose builder and maker is God; and from materials, to a worldly glance often seemingly rude and discordant, they raised the noblest and most elevating of all sciences, Christian Theology.

We now turn to the *second* division of our subject, in order to view the relations in which the clergy, during the period preceding the accession of Constantine, stood to the world from which they had separated themselves. It at once appears that the influence of the Christian priesthood on the civil government of the empire was as nothing during these centuries compared to the

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importance it attained during those immediately following. The teachers of the Gospel, dependent as yet entirely on the voluntary contributions of their flocks, and exercising over them none of that indefinite magisterial authority which was assigned to them by the piety or the policy of the Christian emperors, seldom, if ever, fell under the eye of the government in their capacity of a corporate body. True, they were ever the foremost to suffer from the fury of the intolerant and to rejoice in the favour of the tolerant among the successors of Augustus, but their rulers had not yet learnt to view them as a main portion of the great machinery of the state, and to make use of them as an indispensable link to connect the ever more and more dislocated fragments of a tottering empire. It is not uncommonly urged by men who take a strange delight in inveighing against the weakness of the foundations of the ecclesiastical edifice which shelters them, while they admire its present excellence, that we can attribute no truly beneficial effects to the influence of the clergy and Church on the world without, previous to the public acknowledgment of the truth, because to the eye of secular history the moral progress of the empire during the first three centuries is imperceptible. They assert that the whole social movement of those ages was one of unmitigated degradation; that, in spite of Christianity, the misery of the many was, throughout Europe and Asia alike, more and more promoted by the inordinate luxury of the few; that lands, the ancient abodes of free nations, were rapidly consigned to the profitless cultivation of

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servile gangs, and that every noble and generous sentiment seemed to be fading away from among the sons of men. Such having been the undoubted condition of the political world, they plausibly demand the fruits of the moral and social reforms for which the Church reveres its early champions, and they attribute the traditional virtues of ecclesiastics to the partiality of their clerical chroniclers and successors. To such a charge as this, it would scarcely be sufficient to object that the kingdom of which they were ministers was not of this world, for abundant evidence is not lacking that though not *of* the world, it was not barren of good works *in* the world. A more convincing answer is to be found in the system of Christian instruction, from which the believer learnt to scorn the pomp of secular power, and to turn away with aversion from all those high civil offices, by which alone could the principles of a pure faith have been strikingly and convincingly borne to the relief of a decaying polity. The ambition of the aspiring Christian was sedulously turned from the curule chair to the more glorious, because more perilous elevation of the episcopal seat. The most splendid of Imperial dignities might well be despised by men who looked upon the honors of pastoral sway upon earth as a sure foretaste* of an exalted judgment-seat in the world to come, and they might reasonably consider as mis-spent in restoring the vigour of a Pagan system that force of unswerving rectitude which might have added but one denizen to the city of God below. Another

* See Lactantius, *Institut. Div.* vii. c. 24.

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yet more convincing proof that the changes proclaimed by the Christian clergy were those of inward heartfelt reform, not those of revolutionary social re-organization, may be found in the relation in which they placed themselves to the institution of slavery, the darkest blot on the civilization of the ancient world. It has been made a frequent subject of cavil that priests of a religion, whose very watchword was universal love and brotherly charity, should never have proclaimed liberty to the temporal as well as the spiritual captives, and rendered all the members of their flocks equal before men as they were in the sight of God. In answer to such charges as this let us hear the words of the venerable Ignatius;

"Despise not slaves, male or female; but neither let them be contemptuous; but as for the glory of God let them labor more abundantly, that they may be meet for that more excellent liberty which is of God. Let them not desire to be set at liberty from that which is common, that they may not be found the slaves of lusts*." Again, at a later period, we have not dissimilar sentiments expressed in the nervous language of Tertullian. "Coronat libertas secularis. Sed tu jam redemptus es a Christo, et quidem magno. Servum alienum, quomodo seculum manumittet? Etsi libertas videtur, sed et servitus videbitur. Omnia imaginaria in seculo, et nihil veri. Nam et tunc liber hominis eras redemptus a Christo; et nunc servus es Christi, licet manumissus ab homine. Si veram

* Ep. to Polycarp, [p. 7, *Corp. Ign.*] ed. Cureton, [c. 4. ed. Jacobs.]

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putas seculi libertatem, ut et corona eam consignes, redisti in servitutem hominis, quam putas libertatem; amisisti libertatem Christi, quam putas servitutem*." Such phrases clearly disclose to us the high mark towards which the exhortations of the Fathers urged on their disciples[1]. Worldly privileges and worldly contumely were equally contemptible to those whose entire energies were devoted to the preparation for an eternal kingdom.

It appears, then, that under the mysterious guidance of their beneficent Head, the efforts of the Christian teachers were directed, not to remodel the Roman system, but to sow securely, in the propitious soil of the Church, such good seed, as might in a future and more auspicious age bring forth its fruit abundantly. The seal, moreover, with which in the hour of trial they confirmed their previous instructions, may assure us of the confidence with which they anticipated the final triumph of their cause—for they faced the terrors of martyrdom with the resolution of men who felt, like their worthy successors in our own land, that "they were lighting such a fire as was not soon to be put out."

* *De Corona*, c. 13.

[1] To take an instance, Cyprian (*Ep.* 13), rejoicing with Rogatian and other confessors in their position in the Church, urges them to perseverance in the faith, and to be an example to others in peaceableness and humility; chiefly as he had heard that some among them had forgotten their former life, had been puffed up by pride, and had fallen into vain and filthy conversation. He contrasts this with the silence of our Lord's sufferings, and adds warnings against contentious provocations among confessors.

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It was scarcely to be expected that the wise or the great of this world should be attracted by a creed whose workings were to them so hidden,—whose results so apparently puny: much less that the self-interests of mankind should generally bow down before a faith whose virtues shone most brightly at the very moment when to imitate them was most perilous, or should adopt tenets the bare suspicion of which was the loss of all that the world counts great and honorable. Yet before the commanding uprightness of the doctrine and practice of the Gospel, even the prejudices of heathen philosophy gave way. Not to refer to the well known testimony of the younger Pliny, there have been preserved to us the following striking expressions of the philosophic physician Galen:

"Hi (i. e. Christiani) interdum talia faciunt, qualia qui vere philosophantur. Quod mortem contemnunt, id quidem omnes ante oculos habemus. * * Sunt etiam [inter eos] qui in animis regendis coercendisque et in acerrimo honestatis studio eo progressi sint, ut nihil cedant vere philosophantibus*." This is but a somewhat technical expression of the great fact in the clerical life,

* Galen, [*De sent. pol. Plat.*, ap. Abulfedæ *Hist. anteisl.* p. 109, ed. Fleischer. A similar passage ("Horum [Naziræorum] non pauci revera philosophi sunt: amant enim temperantiam, perseverant in jejunio, adhibentque curam ut nihil gustent.") is likewise ascribed to Galen,] *Comm. in Phædonem*, [ap. Bar-Hebræi *Chron. Syr.* p. 55. ed. Bruns et Kirsch.] quoted by Gieseler, *Ch. History*, Vol. I. [I. ii. 1. § 41], p. 126 [Eng. Tr.] Almost the same phrase is used by Melito, ap. Routh, *Rel. Sac.* II. p. 119.

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by which they attained to such complete authority over those within the fold, and such a converting power, more active than the most zealous of missionary exertions could have been, over the unbelieving without.

In conclusion, we are struck by the consideration which presents itself to us on reviewing the progress and scope of clerical influence during the early and middle ages, that although that influence arose and spread during the continuance of the Roman power, it had nevertheless, politically speaking, a more special Providential relation to a later period. It appears as if the fulness of Imperial iniquity in the West had been divinely permitted to run its career of vice unchecked by the purer discipline which had grown up among it—till, after the priesthood had received the education of calamity, and had been accustomed, as we shall see hereafter, to complete connexion with the state, it was sent forth, thus prepared, on its true mission of spreading the truths of the Gospel among new nations, and laying the foundations of a less grovelling civilization.

To expatiate more at length on the direct religious benefits of clerical influence would be to extol Christianity itself. We shall now enter, in examining the two succeeding centuries, on a field of inquiry than which none can contain more matter of interest or instruction to us, whose circumstances are in many respects not dissimilar.

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[CHAPTER III.]

THE portion of history included in the *second* great chronological division of our subject, and extending from the accession of Constantine to the fall of the Western Empire, presents to our view the Christian clergy burdened with new duties, and exposed to other not less dangerous temptations than those with which we witnessed their contest during the preceding centuries. Then, we saw them employed in establishing the rules of Christian discipline and practice among all the temptations of a world lying in wickedness; now, their great task is to engraft that discipline on the ancient Pagan institutions of an Empire whose conquest to the cause of truth is as yet far from complete. Then, they were settling the pure canon of the faith against the assaults of the heathen and the arrogance of the human intellect; now, they are rather occupied in asserting the clear meaning of the Word of God against the numerous schismatics who do but wrest it to their own destruction. Then, they displayed the force of pure example and doctrine in persuading men who had been persecutors to take up their lot with the persecuted; now, amid all the temptations of Imperial patronage, their task rather is to exclude from the fold such nominal converts as seek to combine all the supineness of the old creed with all the worldly advantages of the new. Then, they were in danger of sacrificing to the inducements of a life of

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security and prosperity the faith which in their consciences they yet held; now, on the contrary, every seduction of worldly advantage leads them to court prosperity by the profession of tenets to which they yield merely nominal assent. The most superficial acquaintance with human infirmity would teach us to expect that bulwarks long unscathed by adversity should totter at last at the more pernicious approaches of prosperity; nor could the most sanguine believer in the stainless perfections of the Church have hoped that its contact with so much that was impure should leave untarnished all its former brilliancy.

It is, then, at first sight evident that we shall meet, in the examination of the *first* head under this section of our subject, many peculiarities to which in the preceding pages we have necessarily been strangers, — that the moral influence of the clergy on their people, exalted as they now are to a novel elevation, will assume very different forms from what it did during the age of persecution.

The combination of so long distinct religious and political systems, while it in some measure simplifies our task, by laying before us the results of the former illustrated by all the added historic clearness of the latter, nevertheless imposes upon us corresponding difficulties; for the social action of the priesthood, no longer a merely direct one, but also transferred through the medium of the supreme authority, renders it a less easy task to distinguish between their moral and their political influence.

No sooner had the clerical body assumed its position as one of the leading powers in the state, than its

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systematic discipline and doctrines were placed before the world in a more effective and to the eye of history more evident form, by the introduction of government by œcumenical councils. It is principally by the decrees of such general convocations of ecclesiastical wisdom that we discover the steps by which the principles so long carefully inculcated by the earlier Fathers of the Church on their scanty flocks were rendered meet for being applied to the social system of the entire Roman world. And the more we acquaint ourselves with the moral code thus enunciated, the more are we convinced how stedfastly were preserved and exercised in their new and wider sphere those leading Christian doctrines which had been handed down from the Apostolic age: for the very same excesses, which had been condemned by the uncompromising piety of the primitive Bishops, received, at the hands of their successors in Councils assembled, not less severe reprobation. One or two examples will be sufficient to show how, by a gradual but effective process, the corrupt system of Paganism was raised to a higher level by the pure action of Christianity, while, at the same time, we shall be able clearly to perceive the same aversion to radical and sudden alteration which was one of the principal characteristics and safeguards of the Church during her earlier stage.

We have already viewed Christianity in its relation to slavery; we shall now glance at the commencement of that gradual course of mitigatory laws by which it has become peculiarly associated with slave-abolition in our

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own day. The Christian Fathers, it is true, never repudiated the Roman slave-system; on the contrary, we find among the enactments of the earlier councils, that it is repeatedly acknowledged as a recognized principle, both among clergy and laity. But by the laws of Rome no limit was set to the amount of punishment which a refractory slave might suffer from his master, who, if his slave died under the infliction, was not liable to a capital prosecution, unless he could be proved to have made use of a lethal weapon, or any other equally disproportionate mode of punishment; and even such a check as this was the result of the comparative moderation of the Theodosian* code: whereas the more scrupulous ecclesiastical canon imposed five years of penance and exclusion from the communion on the proprietor who was guilty even of an involuntary murder of the kind†.

The ecclesiastical Fathers, again, were the first to place in its true light the crime of suicide, and to inflict upon the body of him who had deprived himself of life the same ignominy which was decreed for the more ordinary violators of the sixth commandment‡; a striking contrast to those heathen philosophers who looked back with regretful admiration to the virtues and deaths of Cato and Brutus. It would be easy, but unnecessary, to multiply

* [Edict. Constantini ap.] *Cod. Theodos.* Lib. IX. tit. 12, leg. 1.

† *Conc. Illib.* [Can. 5. ap. Routh. *Rell. Sac.* IV. 260. ed. 2.] quoted by Bingham, B. XVI. c. 10. § 8.

‡ See Bingham, B. XVI. c. 10. § 6, and Augustine *De Civ. Dei*, i. 20.

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instances of the introduction, by means of the heads of the Church, of a more perfect moral code into the Roman world.

Another means, perhaps yet more satisfactory, by which we may form an estimate of the effect produced on the ethical sentiments of the entire Roman Empire by the elevation of the Christian clergy to a new authority, is presented by the edicts of the Theodosian code; and lest it should be supposed irrelevant to look for traces of Christian influence in the works of Roman legislation, it must be remembered that, both under Constantine and under his successors, the prelates of the Church occupied no insignificant position in the Imperial Councils, and that it is scarcely likely that decrees in which the principles of their faith were involved should have been promulgated unprompted or unsupported by them.

As a remarkable instance of the manner in which the Christian morality was incorporated, by means of the action of the priestly body, with the ancient system of Roman legislation, we may turn to the edict of Constantine "De manumissionibus in Ecclesia," included in the Theodosian Code*. We find there the Church placed in

* Lib. IV. tit. 7. [The following are the terms of the edict: "Qui religiosa mente in Ecclesiæ gremio servulis suis meritam concesserit libertatem, eandem eodem jure donasse videatur, quo civitas Romana solennitatibus decursis dare consuevit. Sed hoc duntaxat iis, qui sub aspectu antistitum dederint, placuit relaxari. Clericis autem amplius concedimus, ut, cum suis famulis tribuunt libertatem, non solum in conspectu Ecclesiæ ac religiosi populi, plenum fructum libertatis concessisse dicantur, verum etiam cum

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a novel relation to slavery; for the clergy, though as yet far from taking upon themselves to proclaim liberty to the captives, are nevertheless in a certain degree identified with the principles of humanity and freedom. That portion of the prætor's functions, by which, under the ancient law of Rome, he bestowed freedom and civil rights on the slave, was now transferred to the Christian minister; and the newly acquired liberty, which was formerly derived from the touch of the prætorian wand, now flowed from the holy precincts of the Church, and was accompanied by the sacerdotal benediction[1].

In other instances, again, we can trace in the Imperial edicts the more direct results of clerical instructions. And

postremo judicio libertates dederint seu quibuscunque verbis dari præceperint: ita ut, ex die publicatæ voluntatis, sine aliquo juris teste vel interprete competat directa libertas. Dat. XIIII Kal. Mai. Crispo II. et Constantino II. Coss. (321.)"

See the authorities cited by Gothofred in the notes.]

[1] Ducange (s. v. *Manumissio in Ecclesia*, t. IV. p. 256 *a*, ed. 1845) refers to Sozomen, *H. E.* I. 9: [ὑπὸ γὰρ ἀκριβείας νόμων καὶ ἀκόντων τῶν κεκτημένων, πολλῆς δυσχερείας οὔσης περὶ τὴν κτῆσιν τῆς ἀμείνονος ἐλευθερίας, ἣν πολιτείαν Ῥωμαίων καλοῦσι, τρεῖς ἔθετο νόμους [ὁ Κωνσταντῖνος], ψηφισάμενος πάντας τοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις ἐλευθερουμένους ὑπὸ μάρτυσι τοῖς ἱερεῦσι πολιτείας Ῥωμαικῆς τυγχάνειν.] and Augustine [*Serm.* 21. tom. v. col. 113 c.] "Servum tuum manumittendum manu ducis in ecclesiam. Fit silentium, libellus tuus recitatur, aut fit desiderii tui prosecutio. Dicis te servum manumittere, quod tibi in omnibus servaverit fidem." And again, (p. 256 *c*) *Serm.* '50 *De div.*' [356, t. v. col. 1386 G. ed. Ben. "Diaconus Hipponensis homo pauper est: quid alicui conferat non habet: tamen de laboribus suis antequam esset clericus emerat aliquos servulos: hodie illos in conspectu vestro manumissurus est episcopalibus gestis."]

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in none more strikingly than in the law of Constantine "De Alimentis," one of those most immediately subsequent to his conversion, by which provision is made against the crime of infanticide*. This evil had risen to a fearful pitch during the distresses of the civil strife which ended in the undisturbed accession of Constantine to the throne. It had called forth the expostulations of Lactantius, tutor to the Cæsar Crispus, who in his Divine Institutions† inveighs bitterly against the parricidal violence which was every day increasing with the increasing poverty of the people. Very shortly after the publication of the work of Lactantius appeared the decree above alluded to, by which such parents as are prevented by extreme penury from rearing their children are empowered to claim support from the Imperial treasury. Here, then, we may fairly conjecture we have the record of one of the earliest consequences of Christian education on the mind of the princely convert. This, though perhaps the most remarkable instance of the kind, is but one out of many, from which we might trace the moral improvement of the Roman law, and the successive steps by which it approximated to the lofty standard of the Gospel, as far as in so rapidly degenerating an age the true injunctions of Scripture could be discerned through the mass of accumulating tradition and the mists of theological prejudice.

* Lib. XI. tit. 27.

† Lactant. *Inst. Div.* l. VI. c. 20; and see Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, l. I. c. 15.

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The indirect influence of the priesthood on the people, through the medium of Roman legislation, will appear all the more worthy of notice when we remember that the edicts emanating from the shores of the Bosphorus were destined to act, not only on the millions who then owned the Imperial sway, but on the yet more numerous Teutonic hordes of subsequent centuries. The citizens of Rome, dispersed among barbarian tribes in the remotest European lands, rejoiced for generations in the institutions of Theodosius, and the Burgundian and Visigothic chiefs, who aimed at something superior to the rude constitutions of their progenitors, drew largely from the same prolific source.

But however much clerical action might tend to improve legislation, and however much the civilizing power of the true faith might continue to make itself known throughout the world, the history of the period can never permit us to forget the too evident reciprocal action of the world upon the Church, or to ignore the general debasement of the clerical spirit from the age of the Apostolic Fathers and their more immediate successors.

It would, indeed, have been strange had it been otherwise, had discussions, too often tinged with theological bitterness during the period when orthodoxy gave merely a priority of martyrdom, been softened down when it became the passport to Imperial patronage and political sway. The narrow-mindedness and intolerance characteristic of the religious controversies of the East were nothing more than the carrying out on a larger scale

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of that rising spirit of discord which had so often incurred the rebuke of St Paul. Ecclesiastical history attests too well the truth of Gibbon's sneer, that from Constantine the clergy received "Security, wealth, honours, and revenge;" for although it would not be difficult to point out prelates not a few who had more truly learnt the doctrines of the God of love, and who knew how to pity and spare the heretic while they uncompromisingly attacked the heresy[1], yet the arbitrary edicts of Constantine, Valentinian, Gratian, and Theodosius, may convince us that the majority in the Church inculcated very different counsels upon the piety of the Imperial zealots.

A mere glance at the chronology of the fourth century is enough to remind us how closely the accession of the orthodox party to power was followed by the persecutions of the Donatists in Africa[2], and the yet more tragical fate

[1] See August. *Epp.* 33 ("Quid nos solus Christus offendit, cujus membra laniamus?" &c.), 44, 61, 73.

[2] Compare Augustine's letter (*Ep.* 93) to Vincentius the Donatist, rejoicing in the interference of the civil power in certain cases, as having brought back wavering schismatics to the Catholic Church. "De multorum jam correctione gaudemus, qui tam veraciter unitatem Catholicam tenent atque defendunt, et a pristino errore se liberatos esse lætantur, ut eos cum magna gratulatione miremur. Qui tamen nescio qua vi consuetudinis nullo modo mutari melius cogitarent, nisi hoc terrore perculsi sollicitam mentem ad considerationem veritatis intenderent, ne forte si non pro justitia sed pro perversitate et præsumtione hominum ipsas temporales molestias infructuosa et vana tolerantia paterentur, apud Deum postea non invenirent nisi debitas pœnas impiorum, qui ejus tam lenem admonitionem et paterna flagella contemserint." "Si enim quisquam inimicum suum periculosis febribus phrene-

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of Priscillian and his adherents in Spain; with other not less deplorable instances of that confusion between the provinces of spiritual and secular power, equally contrary to the pure standard of early practice and to the scrupulous liberality so prevalent in our own day. We must ever regret that the first examples of ecclesiastical legislation should have proceeded from a people who had so lately experienced the combination of the subtilizing and theorizing propensities of Greece with the sterner practical tendencies still attached to the very shadow of the Roman name.

The sceptical historian has gloated with characteristic eagerness over the zealous excesses of great and holy men in a good cause; his admiration for an Ambrose, an Athanasius, or a Hilary, is lost in his philosophic antipathy to the order they adorned:—to us is assigned the more pleasing task of discovering—what is indeed more or less patent to every observer—the many lofty and noble traits, with the many glorious and permanent results, which we must attribute to the clergy of the later Roman Empire. This we have already in part accomplished; and from many an event in the history of the Church might be traced the workings of an ever-guarding Ruler in turning even the excessive zeal of His ministers to the ultimate profit of His people and of the world at large. We have already seen that during the age of persecution

ticum factum currere videret in præceps, nonne tum potius malum pro malo redderet, si eum sic currere permitteret, quam si corripiendum ligandumque curaret?"

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the lofty moral standard by which the obedience of the laity was tested was yet far inferior to that which secured the purity of the clergy. The ministers of the truth were supposed not only to have subdued the evil propensities of the world around them, but to stand forth as burning and shining lights to the Christian flock. Whatever such distinction may have existed then, was at least maintained, and in some instances seemingly widened, during the period of ecclesiastical ascendancy[1]. We learn from the canons of the early Councils how truly the heads of the Church appreciated the necessity of a moral as well as an intellectual elevation above their people, and how sedulously they strove to raise the body to which they belonged not only above corruption but above even the suspicion of error. The clerical order was preserved from the attractions of debased interests and from the calumnies of malignity by excluding from all participation in its privileges slaves[2] and such as exercised degrading trades: —a salutary regulation of which we are painfully reminded

[1] Compare Augustine, *Epp.* 60, 65, 77, 78.

[2] Thus at a later period the 73d canon of the 4th Council of Toledo [anno 633], quoted by Ducange in v. *Manumissio Directa*. "Quicunque libertatem a dominis suis [ita] percipiunt, ut nullum sibimet obsequium Patronus retentet, isti, si sine crimine sunt, ad clericatus ordinem [libere] suscipiantur, quia directa manumissione absoluti noscuntur. Qui vero retento obsequio manumissi sunt; pro eo quod adhuc a patrono servituti tenentur obnoxii, nullatenus sunt ad ecclesiasticum ordinem promovendi, ne, quando voluerint eorum domini, fiant ex clericis servi." [Mansi. *Conc.* x. 636.]

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in subsequent centuries by its open and frequent violation[1]. It is indeed true that such scrupulous strictness too often degenerated into self-sufficiency and spiritual pride, and that we can early discern the first steps of that fatal process by which priestly independence and political power were secured at the expence of so much that had been cherished and admired by the simplicity of primitive Christianity. Clerical celibacy, the fruitful source of so many corruptions, was beyond all question but one out of many tokens of that striving after some exalted purity, some esoteric ethical code, concealed from the uninitiated vulgar, which the vain philosophy of Greece erected on the foundation of Apostolical traditions.

But although we can neither ignore the existence nor the source of such errors, yet an impartial survey of the moral condition of Europe during the fourth and succeeding centuries, as compared with the depravity of expiring polytheism, must induce us to forget the inevitable abuses while we review the countless benefits of the system to which they clung. We must ever rejoice that clerical influence was effective, not only in raising the moral tone of Imperial legislation, and so transmitting to the states founded on the ruins of Rome a truer theory and practice of justice, but in establishing a pervading strictness of principle, without which mere strictness of jurisprudence must ever be unavailing. We must never

[1] "Rerum omnium lege perversa * * fœnerantur clerici, Syri psallunt," says Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* i. 8) in describing the anomalous state of things at Ravenna in his time.

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forget that the early Christian canons, by imposing on the pastors of the Church a standard of duty and an elevation of sentiment to which even the noblest among their flocks were strangers, made ready for the troublous times to come a bulwark of religion and civilization, destined to survive, though not, alas! unscathed, each succeeding onset of heathendom and barbarism. Indeed, in considering the moral as well as the political influence of the sacerdotal order, we shall find scarce any more interesting view of that subject than that which teaches us to discover in the earliest stages of ecclesiastical history the providential preparation for those mighty convulsions by which so many ancient thrones were to be transferred from Roman or Grecian sceptics to uneducated but plastic barbarians.

The clergy will thus ever appear to be undergoing, even amid the abuses of a degenerate age, such a discipline as may fit them to preserve, through innumerable changes and catastrophes of the external world, those vital truths of which they are the depositaries.

Nowhere do we observe more striking illustrations of this position than in the chronicles of the Church during the decline of the Roman power. It is beyond all question that in the fourth century were laid many of those first seeds of corruption, destined to be so perniciously prolific in after ages. Roman Catholic historians have found it as hopeless a task to establish the unvarying purity of the Church system under Theodosius, as they have to deduce its unswerving rectitude down to the age

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of Charles the Fifth. But although it would be a violation of historic accuracy to conceal such errors as too prominently present themselves, it would be no less a violation of historical logic to imagine that the most zealous of reformers could have predicted the ultimate results from the incipient faults; or to consider the period in question, as too many disputants are inclined to do, solely with reference to the subsequent ages of political or religious reformation. The most superficial theological student of our own day, trained by the accumulated experience of so many centuries, can discover and condemn the weaknesses of systems which would have excited the unprejudiced admiration of Ambrose or of his greater disciple. He can trace every inch of the stream of wrong, from the fountain-head of unnoticed error to the overwhelming flood of subsequent corruption. Rejoicing as he does in an often misplaced acuteness, he is apt to refer the whole consequences of every system to its remote origin, and wondering at the comparative blindness of his forefathers he teaches himself to scorn those whom bygone generations have reverenced. And yet how many do we meet with, who, judging by the prejudices of their own times, forget that the works of the Almighty are no disjointed operations, but connected portions of one great design, raised one above the other in faultless proportion to the furtherance of the welfare of man and the glory of his Maker, who are willingly ignorant of the fact that a true idea of the scheme of Divine government is to be formed by considering every age in reference, not to one

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here or another there among those which have succeeded it, but to the entire harmonious series. Nowhere is it given to man more plainly to trace the progressive dispensations of the Almighty than in the records of His Church, nowhere do we find more abundant tokens of that prescient care which prepares each intricate turn of human affairs for the necessities of the destined future.

During the earlier portion, for example, of the period we are engaged upon, not only does the strictness of adherence to primitive practice produce on the moral condition of the world those results which ever follow the propagation of the true faith, but even in such points as indicate a deviation from early simplicity, and which have formed the most frequent subjects of theologic vituperation, we discern, among apparent present discord, the certain germs of future security. No characteristic of the fourth and fifth centuries has been the subject of more frequent comment and more bitter censure than the accumulation of apparently inordinate power in clerical, and more especially in episcopal, hands: and though it is undeniable that their increased possession of material wealth and political power frequently rendered the priesthood forgetful of more lasting treasures, yet it did likewise, as we shall see, most unquestionably operate in consolidating against outward shocks the vast fabric of the Church.

Nine years after the conversion of Constantine to the Christian faith, he promulgated that great edict*, which,

* *Cod. Theodos.* Lib. xvi. tit. ii. l. 4.

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more than any other enactment, may be said to have lain at the foundation of clerical power during the ensuing centuries; and relieved the Christian Church from that restriction under which, in common with the Jews, they had so long laboured, the incapacity of profiting by the testamentary liberality of their wealthy proselytes. To convince us of the abundance in which the stream of wealth flowed into the newly-opened channel, and of the influence obtained by the clergy, in those days as in the present, over the piety and pliability of the weaker sex, more especially at Rome, we possess not only the testimony of a Pagan historian* but the less suspicious evidence of an edict published by the Emperor Valentinian† fifty years after that of Constantine, addressed to Damasus Bishop of that city, and imposing a limit to the extravagant donations of females. The clergy, moreover, might look for an increase of worldly substance, not only from the prosperity of their friends, but from the downfall of their enemies; for the Theodosian code contains a series of stringent enactments by the Emperor Honorius‡, in terms of which not only the deserted temples of Paganism but even the meeting-houses and possessions of Donatists, Manichæan, and other heretical corporations, were made over to the Catholic Church.

Provision, moreover, was made by Constantine for the supply of the wants of the Church from the provincial

* Ammian. Marcell. l. xxvii. c. 3.

† *Cod. Theodos.* Lib. xvi. tit. ii. l. 20.

‡ Lib. xvi. tit. x. l. 20, and tit. v. legg. 43, 52, 57, 65.

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treasuries. All these sources of revenue, however, we must look upon as subordinate, in seasons of average prosperity, to the support derived from tithes, which appear before the close of the fourth century to have been imposed with considerable regularity on all Christian communities. Such, then, were the main sources of Church revenue during the later Roman Empire; and it will be evident that, much as we may regret that they were so far dependent on the authority exercised by the priesthood over the people, they did tend to elevate every member of the clerical body into a position of considerable estimation in the general social system, and to place the Church, however much it may have been weakened by the disasters of prosperity, on a permanently settled footing. If, again, we consider the distribution of these revenues, we shall find that, in proportion as the sacerdotal order was raised above the laity by the statutes of Constantine and his successors, so were the Bishops elevated above the body of the clergy. Authority was added to the Episcopal office, both by the manner and by the proportions in which the ecclesiastical funds were distributed; for the wealth acquired by the means above specified, instead of being collected by, or appropriated to, every parish, was amassed in the hands of the Bishop of the diocese, and divided among his clergy as might appear to him fit*. This, at least, was the ordinary rule, though we find such eminent exceptions as occurred in the diocese of Hippo, where among the clergy and their illus-

* See Bingham, *Orig. Eccles.* Bk. v. c. 6.

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trious diocesan prevailed a community of goods little less than monastic, and closely resembling the "Canonic rule" which was produced at Metz by the necessities of a subsequent age. The Church, moreover, usually allotted to the Bishop a portion of the whole amount equal to that divided among his clergy, so that his influence was promoted, not only by such shares as he distributed to his inferiors, but by the preponderance of what he was enabled to devote to the furtherance of his own piety, charity, or ambition.

We have already seen that during the early age of the Church the Bishops owed to their station as the moral leaders of their people a duty often imposed upon them of arbitration in the petty litigations of the faithful; and the code of Justinian contains repeated records of edicts by which an ancient custom was amalgamated into the Imperial system, and the Episcopal authority in arbitrating civil causes was placed on an equality with that of the Prefect. Such a measure is of a piece with those to which we have already referred, and might obtain our ready belief, even had we no more satisfactory authority than the forged decree* in the Theodosian Code, which assigns an even more uncontrolled scope to clerical jurisdiction, and can be interesting to us only as having been

* Usually placed at the end of the Theodosian Code, and proved by abundant evidence, both of matter and style, to be a mere cento of the Ecclesiastical Statutes in Justinian's Code. See Gothofredi *Comm. ad locum.* [vi. 303—312. ed. Marvill. Lugduni, 1665.]

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incorporated into the Capitularies* of Charlemagne, and become the law of Europe from the Ebro to the Oder. The lurking satire of Gibbon has been called forth by the picture of "the venerable Austin enjoying the satisfaction of complaining that his spiritual functions were perpetually disturbed by the invidious labour of deciding the claim or the possession of silver and gold, of lands and cattle[1]:" and as we shall more distinctly see hereafter, the civil functions of the Bishop before long seemed to depend merely on his distance from the centre of the expiring Empire.

Such were some of the principal steps by which during the fourth and fifth centuries clerical influence was promoted in the society of the faithful. It would be far from a difficult task to point out many instances in which the excessive exaltation of the ministry proved an effectual bar to the full development of spiritual perfection and energy in the minister[2]; and it would be to repeat an oft-told tale were we to trace from the exorbitant clerical sway among the subjects of Rome or Constan-

* See *Capit. Reg. Franc.* [*Capit. Kar. et Lud.*] Lib. VI. c. 366. [t. i. coll. 985, 6. ed. Baluz. Paris. 1677.]

[1] See Augustin. *Epp.* 33, 40, 83. Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epp.* iii. 12; iv. 11; vi. 2, 3, 4.

[2] In recounting the objections which might be raised to the nomination of a monk, however holy, to a bishopric, Sidonius (*Concio post Ep.* vii. 9) mentions the following: "Hic qui nominatur, inquiunt, non episcopi sed potius abbatis complet officium; et intercedere magis pro animabus apud cœlestem quam pro corporibus apud terrenum judicem potest."

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tinople the moral gangrene pervading every part of the priestly system at a subsequent period.

A speculation more interesting, and more germane to our subject, presents itself to him who, not unmindful of that Providence which works out good even from seeming evil, endeavours to lay open the more beneficial and, it might be added, the more immediate effects of the above conditions on that chaos of ignorance and barbarism from which were to spring so many of the institutions in which we have learnt to rejoice.

The uncouth invaders of Southern Europe, before whom the shrivelled form of Imperial power so rapidly sunk, arrived among the unworthy heirs of so many great and noble ideas, terrible in physical energy, but accessible as children to all the moral influences of the refinement they were overthrowing. The rude bands, which had scorned to shrink before the yet formidable renown of the legions of Rome, bowed submissively before the pomp and ancient fame of her religious and civil supremacy. The conqueror of Aquileia, abashed before the majesty of a Roman Pontiff, was a striking type of the inevitable moral triumph which the world's victors were so soon to adorn. But a Christian Church, however worthy of the name, which should have flourished unnoticed by the great and powerful and adorned by no alluring tokens of outward prosperity, but bearing in the fruitfulness of its hidden work evidence of celestial favour, would have been less calculated to arrest barbarian thoughtlessness than the more miscellaneous structure

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raised by the munificence of Imperial piety. Uncultivated intellects are more easily dazzled than argued into conviction, and we can expect little from the unaided reason of men who are more effectually influenced by the tempting logic of the eye and the imagination. It was fitting then, that the nations of the North should find in the lands which they overran a Church, the temporal elevation of whose sway might strike them with astonishment before they learnt to acquiesce in the spiritual force of its doctrines: that they should be taught to reverence as civil potentates the Patriarchs and Bishops to whose ecclesiastical dominion they were ere long to be subject; that they should obey them as the representatives of a yet revered Cæsar, before they saw in them the ministers of a Deity whose pure moral attributes they could hardly picture to themselves. That ecclesiastical wealth, which during the comparative prosperity of the Western Empire might well arouse the suspicions and call for the condemnation of the scrupulous, was not ill spent in supporting amidst prevailing desolation the sole guardians of Divine Truth. The temporal authority, so often a stumbling-block in the performance of severer duties, became of no small importance when the clergy were the leaders of the Roman population and the only link between ancient enlightenment and barbarian darkness. But we are anticipating what more justly belongs to a subsequent section of our subject.

We have thus, in so far as our narrow limits permit, touched upon the moral benefits of clerical influence, both

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in relation to the existing conditions of Europe during the later empire, and (what to a modern student is even more interesting) viewed as a preparation for the future changes in the distribution of intellectual and political sway.

Before we pass from reviewing the means by which clerical influence was exerted on the believers who continued to throng into the fold of the Church, we must bestow a few words on that ever-increasing intellectual authority, by means of which the churchmen of the fourth and fifth centuries have left so enduring an impression, not only on their contemporaries, but on every succeeding generation of Christians; for while it must be evident that the theological opinions of later ages have been, and will ever continue to be, in no small degree moulded by the profound learning and acumen of those early teachers, yet the stimulus and the direction which the intellectual powers of the Roman world received from them present themselves to us, at least, as a yet more important feature of the ecclesiastical system. And first among the means of clerical usefulness we must place,—what might indeed have been more suitably introduced into our first chronological section,—that Pulpit Eloquence which stands so prominently forward as a distinctive peculiarity of the Christian priesthood in every age. Indeed the main difference between the offices of the Gospel dispensation and those of every other religion lay in this, that the Christian ministers fully combined two functions elsewhere kept, to a greater or less degree, distinct; that they acted at the same time as dispensers of religious

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mysteries, and as instructors of the people in the indispensable religious truths which accompanied those mysteries. In all heathen creeds, if we except the few systematic and occult superstitions of Central Asia, no approach had been made towards a combination of such usually discordant duties; and even in such relics of a purer faith as lurked at Samothrace and Eleusis, priestly instruction, vouchsafed only to the initiated few, tended merely to establish certain ceremonial observances long dissevered from the moral truths which they had once prefigured.

In Greece and Italy the mass of the nation attained whatever knowledge they possessed of their deities from the traditional ballads of an early age, or from the less enduring marbles which adorned their shrines; while the philosophic few had long rejected all real faith in those gods who still obtained their mimic adorations. Religious instruction from the priesthood was thus rendered unavailing to every class of society alike. The purer faith of the Jews, again, though it freed its votaries from the unnatural divorce of religion and philosophy, and placed within the grasp of the popular intellect the connexion between revealed religion and the eternal truths of pure morality, was yet distinguished in one important particular from the creed of which it was the forerunner. The Israelitish priesthood, perpetually occupied by the duties of a cumbrous ceremonial, could have found but little leisure to elucidate the mysteries of their faith, and with them clerical teaching was little more than a recitation of

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the plain decrees of their Almighty Ruler, and a recounting of His mighty deeds of old. It was reserved then for the ministers of a purer dispensation, relieved both from the obscenities of Paganism and from the clogging ceremonies of the Jewish ritual, to assume a more vigorous sway over the religious and intellectual developments of their disciples.

Religious eloquence is as unquestionably the offspring of Christianity, as popular eloquence is of democracy, or forensic eloquence of a refined civilization. Preaching was to Christianity what the sword was to Mahommedanism, its main support both at its origin and in all its subsequent successes. That frequent exercise of oratorical influence of the clergy was from the earliest times an acknowledged portion of the ecclesiastical system, is attested both by the numerous exhortations and yet more striking examples of the great Fathers of the Church, and by the express injunction of one of the Apostolic Canons, in which neglect of preaching in a diocese is declared to be a convincing proof of utter carelessness in its Episcopal head[1].

[1] At a later period (about A. D. 734) Bede thus exhorts Egbert Archbishop of York (*Ep. ad Ecgbert.* 4) to begin his work of reforming the manifold abuses of his diocese: "Lege enim Actus Apostolorum, et videbis referente Luca quales secum comites apostoli Paulus et Barnabas habuerint, quid etiam ipsi ubicunque devenissent operis egerint. Statim namque ut civitates vel synagogas ingressi sunt, Verbum Dei prædicare et per omnia disseminare curabant. Quod etiam te, dilectissimum mihi caput, sagaciter cupiam, ubicunque potes, implere; in hoc namque officium a Domino electus, in hoc consecratus es, ut Verbum evangelizes

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But while we acknowledge the pre-eminent moral authority of the Christian pulpit, we must not forget the intellectual results which we undoubtedly owe to it. Long after ancient elocution had vanished from its favourite haunts in the Pnyx and the Forum, when the masterpieces of Cicero and Demosthenes were little read, oratory arose again, in a form, truly, cramped and mutilated, and bearing but the faintest reflection of its former glory, but yet living and prolific of life in others.

Rough and untutored as it often was, it possessed over its polished predecessors this manifest advantage, that whatever might be wanting in the fluency of diction was supplied by the intrinsic dignity of the subject; and even when most wanting in external allurements it smote with an equal force of application upon the ears alike of senator and of serf[1]. Every man had an opportunity of

virtute magna, præbente tibi auxilium ipso rege virtutum Domino nostro Jesu Christo. Quod ita rite perficies si, ubicunque perveneris, mox collectis ad te ejusdem loci incolis, verbum illis exhortationis exhibueris, simul et exemplum vivendi una cum omnibus qui tecum venerint quasi cœlestis militiæ ductor ostenderis."

[1] "Enimvero etsi plerique sanctorum Patrum, a puriori recedentes Latinitate, nedum receptis verum etiam barbaris usi sint vocabulis, non ideo tamen elegantiæ omnis atque literaturæ expertes fuisse sunt censendi. Cum id affectatione quadam vulgarem sermonem præferrent cultiori, ut ad eorum captum, quos Christianæ religionis imbuere præceptis, aut a quibus volebant in concionibus intelligi, orationes suas componerent, quemadmodum Julianum, recens Imperatorem creatum, 'verbis, ut intelligi posset, simplicibus,' milites in tribunali allocutum, refert Ammianus. (Lib. xx. [c. 5]).

Græcam facundiam, quod de S. Paulo dicebat Hieronymus,

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hearing, in language which, if not polished, was at least adorned with all the fervour of religious enthusiasm, the glorious deeds of the men whom the Church reveres. He might learn from the mouths of an erudite and enlightened clergy those leading principles of our Religion which fully to appreciate is in itself an education; and the use of exact metaphysical terms and of a scrupulous logic, though too often perverted to sectarian purposes, could not but tend to reanimate through the world the expiring sparks of Greek philosophy. Indeed the ultimate effect of public clerical teaching in restoring, both in the Roman Empire and in the subsequent barbarian states, a taste for high intellectual pursuits, and for abstruser speculations, can hardly be ignored by one who traces the mental development of the European nations[1].

contemnebant, vel certe quod est humilitatis dissimulabant, ut prædicatio eorum non in persuasione verborum, sed in signorum virtute consisteret; spernentes alienas opes, qui in suis divites erant; cum præterea, 'nollent ea cavere, quæ sano intellectui nihil detrahunt.' (Aug. *De Doctr. Christ.* [ii. § 20] c. 13.)" Preface to Ducange's *Glossary*, c. 60.

[1] In discussing the fifth period of Roman literature, and speaking of the degeneracy of eloquence and philosophy along with the advance of mere grammatical studies, Baehr (*Geschichte d. Röm. Litter.* i. § 23) says, "Dass die Ausbreitung des Christenthums zu diesem Verfall beigetragen, indem es die Erhaltung und das Fortbestehen eines besseren Geschmacks in Literatur und Sprache verhindert, lässt sich keineswegs nachweisen; es ist vielmehr die allgemeine Verbreitung der christlichen Religion im Abendlande als ein Hauptmittel anzusehen, durch welches bei dem Ruin des Reichs und dem Untergang der politischen Gestaltung nicht blos die Erhaltung und selbst Ausbreitung der römischen Sprache, die nun die Sprache der Kirche und Religion ward,

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But the cause of learning and philosophy was at the same time promoted by more direct means than these; the pagan schools of Alexandria and Antioch, as the teachers of the old superstition disappeared, became

sondern auch die Bildung einer neuen, dem Dienste des Christenthums und der Religion gewidmeten Literatur, welche auf die fortgesetzten Studien der älteren classischen Literatur begründet war, möglich geworden ist." And again, (I. § 24): "Mit dem Ende dieser fünften Periode [A. D. 410] lässt sich gewissermassen auch das Ende der römischen Literatur festsetzen, wenn auch gleich die Sprache noch fort im Munde der Besiegten sich erhielt, oder auch selbst auf die Sieger übergieng, schon durch die Nothwendigkeit, die Verbindungen mit den Besiegten zu unterhalten; was freilich aber auch wieder diesselbe mannichfachen Veränderungen aussetzte, welche die Sprache verschlimmerten und auf ihre Reinheit nachtheilig einwirkten. Andererseits muss freilich auch der Umstand berücksichtigt werden, dass die durch den Einfluss des Christenthums veränderte Begriffs- und Denksweise nicht mehr in den älteren beschränkten Formen und Ausdrucksweisen sich halten oder vielmehr damit sich begnügen könnte, und dadurch eine Erweiterung der zum Ausdruck der neuen Begriffe und Ideen anzupassenden Sprache hervorrief, wodurch allerdings die Sprache selbst einen veränderten Charakter, der der veränderten geistigen Auschauung und dem christlichen Ideenkreise entsprach, annehmen musste. So zeigt allerdings die Sprache der christlichen Schriftsteller, welche zunächst solche in den Bereich des Christenthums fallende Gegenstände behandelten, einen eigenthümlichen Charakter, und im einzelnen bei den sorgfältigen Studien älterer Muster, die wir theilweise wahrnehmen, selbst noch einen gewissen Fluss der Rede und eine ziemliche Reinheit. Die lateinische Sprache war noch immer die Sprache der Regierung, wie sie die der Geistlichkeit war, deren Sprache, einzelne Ausnahmen abgerechnet, noch immer reiner und besser als diejenige war, worin die Documente der weltlichen Herrn abgefasst wurden."

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renowned nurseries of theological lore: and the literary annals of France* celebrate the learning which still flourished in the Episcopal city of Irenæus, and the religious zeal which in every district of Gaul, maintained in the most troubled days the studies of which that country was destined to become so prolific. Moreover, in addition to the regular provision by which the clergy secured the learning and piety of their successors, a most important source of additional instruction was to be found in the "*clerus*" of each worthy occupant of an Episcopal see; we cannot doubt that the clergy, for example, who sat at the feet of Augustine, learnt from his unfailing judgment and from the true Christianity of his demeanour lessons far more practically beneficial than they could have derived from the exegetical or metaphysical speculations of Alexandria.

We should far exceed the legitimate boundaries of our subject were we to specify the enduring intellectual treasures handed down by the Church Fathers of those days to the latest posterity; but in general we cannot but remark the prevailing tendency of the mental activity of the age to direct itself more and more every year into the channels of theological speculation. We may gather from the Confessions of Augustine, a work from which more than from any other we obtain an insight into the theological and philosophical extravagancies of the fifth century, how in many a powerful but ill-regulated mind the true knowledge of divine things was attained only

* See the *Histoire Littéraire de la France.* t. II. p. 4, &c.

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after a long experience of the futility of all mere earthly substitutes: indeed the picture there presented to us of the workings of an individual intellect may be considered not inadequately to represent the various forms assumed by the world of ideas both among the clergy and the laity.

It must however be observed here (though this fact will come more fully before us in treating of the monastic orders) that no two theories of clerical life and influence could be more diametrically opposite to each other than those of the Eastern and Western extremities of the Empire during this period. The priesthood of the East, following out in a great measure the principles of stern asceticism and enthusiasm which were supported by the great authority of Jerome, held the literature and philosophy of heathendom in an abhorrence closely akin to that which aroused their denunciations of lurking idolatry. The estimation in which the writings of Cicero were held by the great leaders of the Eastern and Western* clergy supplies us with a satisfactory test of their theological scruples. But if from Africa we direct our glance to

* See Jerome, *Ep.* 22. [t. i. col. 112 D. ed. Vall.] and August. *Confess.* [iii. 7. ed. Ben. "Perveneram in librum quemdam cujusdam Ciceronis, cujus linguam fere omnes mirantur, pectus non ita. Sed liber ille ipsius exhortationem continet ad philosophiam, et vocatur Hortensius. Ille vero liber mutavit affectum meum, et ad teipsum, Domine, mutavit preces meas, et vota ac desideria mea fecit alia. Viluit mihi repente omnis vana spes, et immortalitatem sapientiæ concupiscebam æstu cordis incredibili: et surgere cœperam ut ad te redirem."]

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Gaul, we are induced to believe that the elegant latitudinarianism of a portion, at least, of the clergy in that country was as far removed from the strict principles of Augustine, as the latter were from the sternness of the hermit of Bethlehem. Should it perchance be imagined that the priesthood, neglecting profane studies in their zeal for sacred erudition, were universally relinquishing the arts and refinements of life, the letters of Sidonius Apollinaris, written towards the close of the fifth century, will remove from Gaul, at least, all suspicion of unbending puritanism. In one of these, the literary Bishop of Clermont encloses an epitaph on his friend*, Claudianus Mamercus, in which the merits of the deceased are celebrated in verse whose would-be Augustan elegance serves only to show with how much fruitless care the classical models were studied by a declining age. But although we may hesitate in giving full credence to the accomplishments of one who excited the admiration of so poor a critic, yet we must acknowledge that the priestly poet,

* "Hoc dat cespite membra Claudianus,
Triplex bibliotheca quo magistro
Romana, Attica, Christiana fulsit.
Quam totam monachus virente in ævo
Secreta bibit institutione.
Orator, dialecticus, poeta,
Tractator, geometra, musicusque.
* * * * *
Psalmorum hic modulator et phonascus,
Ante altaria, fratre gratulante,
Instructas docuit sonare classes."
[*Ep.* iv. 11.]

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in praising the powers of eloquence, poetry, and geometry possessed by his friend, was drawing a picture of accomplishments as yet far from neglected[1]; and even the most hearty despiser of secular lore might look with complacency on successful efforts to promote Church music.

The author of the halting hendecasyllabics we have quoted above was himself a curious exemplification of the literary tendencies prevalent among a certain portion of the Western clergy. Born a century after the puritans of the East had first anathematized all pagan literature as little better than a return to Pagan superstition, he continued, even after his elevation to an Episcopal see, the center of a circle of literary associates who were to the companions of Horace and Virgil what Honorius and Valentinian were to Augustus. The contemplative solitude of a Basil or a Jerome could find little acceptance in the eyes of a prelate ever ready to forget the burthen of his high office in the company of the early poets and sages; and who seems to have countenanced the celebration of Christian festivals which would hardly have aroused the philosophic scruples of a Tacitus or a Pliny[2]. While

[1] Sidonius, writing to the Frankish chief Arvogastes and complimenting him on his Latin style, (*Ep.* iv. 17) advises him to consult on literary matters his neighbouring clergy, i.e. those of Metz, &c., "ætate grandævis, fide claris, opere vulgatis, ore promptis, memoria tenacibus, omni denique meritorum sublimium dote potioribus, * * quorum doctrinæ abundanti eventilandæ nec consultatio tua sufficit."

[2] Thus the celebration of the feast of St Justus at Lyons (*Ep.* v. 17) seems to have contained a strange mixture of heathen and Christian doings;—crowded matin service, followed by games

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the laborious Fathers of the Eastern Church were occupied with the severe studies of biblical criticism and philology, a prelate who enjoyed the respect and confidence of the Gallic Churches[1] was corresponding with his friends on trivial subjects, in a style which, however wide an extent of classical reading it may indicate, is a mere cento of sounding phrases from Virgil, elegancies from Pliny, and epigrammatic nothings from Martial[2]. It

at ball and dice. The reform however in the Rogations, which had been effected by Mamercus bishop of Vienna, was approved and continued by Sidonius (*Ep.* v. 1, 14).

[1] See Gregor. Turon. *Hist. Franc.* ii. 22, 23.

[2] Instances of the light in which Jerome and Augustine regarded mere classical purity of diction are given in the Preface to Ducange's *Glossary*, c. 57: "Sed et S. Hieronymus fatetur, primis adolescentiæ annis, Tullio, Platone, cæterisque ejusmodi Gentilibus Scriptoribus perlectis, in semetipsum reversum Prophetas legere cœpisse. Sed horum, subdit ille, 'Sermo horrebat incultus, et quia lumen cæcis oculis non videbam, non oculorum putabam culpam esse, sed solis' (*Epist.* 22. c. 30).

Ut ait S. Augustinus (in *Psalm.* 138. § 20), plerumque consuetudo loquendi vulgaris utilior est significandis rebus quam integritas literata: Mallem quippe, ut ait, cum barbarismo dici *non est absconditum ossum meum* quam ut ideo esset minus apertum, quia magis Latinum est.

Quo spectant ista Hieronymi (in *Ezech.* c. 40), 'Illud autem semel monuisse sufficiat, nosse me *cubitum* et *cubita* neutrali appellari genere; sed pro simplicitate et facilitate intelligentiæ vulgique consuetudine ponere masculino; non enim nobis curæ est vitare sermonum vitia, sed Scripturæ Sanctæ quibuscunque verbis disserere.'

Et alio loco (*De Vest. Sacerdot.* [*Ep.* 64. c. 11]). *Camisiæ* vocabulum usurpaturus, 'Volo,' inquit, 'pro legentis facilitate abuti sermone vulgari.'"

After other quotations, he adds (c. 58,) "Denique, ut cæteros qui id argumenti sunt prosecuti omittam, Salvianus carpens

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seems as unnatural to class such a man with a Chrysostom or a Gregory Nazianzen, as it would have been in a later age to compare the thoughtless Abbés of the Versailles Court with the erudite disciples of St Maur or the stern followers of De Rancé[1].

But although the verdict of history must assign their true relative positions to such very different ornaments of the clerical order as those we have above contrasted, yet it must be remarked that in the Bishop of Clermont is extant a representative of a mode of sacerdotal action, destined, under the Carlovingian Emperors, to stand forward in far greater prominence. I allude to what may be denominated the æsthetic influence of the priesthood. It shall be our task, in the ensuing section, to point out how the sacerdotal order was specially effective in pre-

quosdam sui temporis scriptores, qui verborum sectabantur amœnitates, et ut sive utiles ac probas, sive inutiles atque improbas materias sibi delegissent, seriem tantum rerum nitore verborum illustrarent: 'Nos autem,' inquit, 'qui rerum magis quam verborum amatores utilia potius quam plausibilia sectamur, neque id quærimus, ut in nobis inania sæculorum ornamenta, sed ut salubria rerum emolumenta laudentur; in scriptiunculis nostris non lenocinia esse volumus, sed remedia, quæ scilicet non tam otiosorum auribus placeant, quam ægrotorum mentibus prosint, magnum ex utraque re cœlestibus donis fructum reportaturi.' (In Præf. ad Lib. I. *De Provid.*)"

[1] His incapacity for his office is acknowledged and lamented in the following terms (*Ep.* v. 3): "Ego autem infelicis conscientiæ mole defessus, vi febrium nuper extremum salutis accessi, utpote cui indignissimo tantæ professionis pondus impactum est, qui miser ante compulsus docere quam discere et ante præsumens bonum prædicare quam facere, tanquam sterilis arbor, cum non habeam opera pro pomis, spargo verba pro foliis."

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serving, and finally imparting to the invading tribes, the blessings of an older civilization: nor can it escape our notice that the gentler arts and luxuries of Rome must have been in some measure influential in training those rugged Northern tempers; for rude and untaught minds are ever most easily accessible to the harmonizing powers of music, sculpture, and architecture. Accordingly, when we perceive in the fifth century the first stages of the gradual process by which those arts, lofty in themselves, were yet more ennobled by being enlisted in the service of religion, we cannot but recognize another portion of that complicated system of discipline by which the clergy were educated for the future emergencies of the world. The luxury of the Gallic prelates, objectionable as it undoubtedly was among the effeminate provincials, acquires a deeper significance when viewed in its intercourse with barbarian simplicity; and we can scarcely regret that Christian pastors found leisure for such comparatively frivolous recreations, if we remember that they were the destined transmitters of the intellectual torch from ancient to modern times.

In justice, however, to the early Church in Gaul, it must be observed that through much apparent thoughtlessness and worldliness there ran a vein of sincere piety[1];

[1] In the epistle (iv. 11), which contains the lines already quoted (p. 73) on the presbyter Claudius Mamercus's accomplishments, Sidonius Apollinaris thus describes his friend's ministerial character: "Conditionis humanæ per omnia memor clericos opere, sermone populares, exhortatione mœrentes, destitutos solatio, captivos pretio, jejunos cibo, nudos operimento consolabatur." Patiens, bishop of

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and that the predilection for profane studies was accompanied by a zeal in the discovery of truth, and an energy in its defence, not unworthy of the countrymen of Hilary*. A wide and interesting field of inquiry would lie before us, were we to investigate the several benefits which accrued to the cause of truth among their contemporaries from the theological champions of the Eastern and Western Empires; and it would be still farther to exceed our allotted province were we to undertake to show how far succeeding generations of the faithful have been preserved from evil, and strengthened in the knowledge of the Gospel, by the "great legacies of thought" transmitted to us through so many intervening centuries.

Before we pass from viewing the clerical influence on the body of the people during this the Roman period of Christianity, as we may term it, we must bestow a few words on the rise and progress of that monastic system, which, not unimportant in the age under our notice, was destined at so many times and by so many different methods to be the great religious lever of Europe. Although the support of those whom after ages learnt to

Lyons, displayed the greatest liberality, "usque in extimos terminos Galliarum," during the famine consequent on the ravages of the Goths (*Ep.* vi. 12; Greg. Turon. *Hist. Franc.* ii. 24); and Sidonius gives a long list of the towns which he had succoured. See also the testimony to the good qualities of Simplicius, which raised him to the see of Bourges (*Concio post Ep.* vii. 9).

* It is sufficient to mention the names of Prosper of Aquitaine and Vincentius Lirinensis, two of the leading opponents of Pelagian and semi-Pelagian heresy.

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term *regular* clergy had not yet been invoked by their *secular* brethren, and the connexion between episcopal powers and monastic privileges was wholly undefined, yet, in viewing the effect of the former, we can scarcely omit the consequences of the gradual development of the latter.

The Eastern Empire, so long the arena for contending theological schools, so fruitful of each heretical extravagancy, and so rank a hot-bed of flimsy religious systems, each varying more widely than its predecessor from the practical spirit of earlier times, was destined, as might indeed have been expected, to produce the most remarkable form of the consequent reaction. Amid the din of opposing factions, and a vain search after imaginary complications of a simple faith, the true Gospel spirit, the humility of Christianity, was forgotten or despised. It was natural then that, where these errors were most rife, where the pleasures of luxury on the one hand and of dogmatism on the other had seduced many of the guardians of the flock as well as its avowed enemies, earnest men should be found to look with horror on a world which called itself Christian, and was the theatre of so many vices. Accordingly it appears to have been despair of success in a contest with depravity, as well as the contemplative tendency of Oriental nations, which led the Anchorites of Egypt and Syria to devote to the conquest of self those powers which they shrunk from engaging in the reform of others. But even these, thoughtful and separate from the world as they had lived,

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carried with them into deserts and caves numerous vestiges of the errors they had left behind. We can trace in the followers of Antony and Pachomius the same narrowness of religious views, the same forgetfulness of the truly spiritual part of the faith they professed, which had already more fatally displayed itself at Alexandria and Antioch. Hence all the strange fanaticism, which, as it appeared in the various sects of Stylites, Euchites, and Sarabaites, raised so high the ascetic renown of the Syrian and Egyptian Churches.

Turning our regards again to the Western Church, the future province of the fullest monastic developments, we are at once struck by the fact that, although the state of religious feeling, both among clergy and laity, differed essentially from what we have represented in the East, Monasticism was nevertheless successfully introduced, and that too in a form very closely resembling what it had assumed in Egypt. That the religious tone of the West was less elevated, less contemplative, and more practical than that of the East, appears from the distinction pervading all their theological controversies. Those of the latter related in general to the mystical union of the persons of the Holy Trinity, and the incarnate perfections of the Son of God, while those of the former tended rather to the decision of practical questions in church-government, and of the great contest between the supporters of grace and those of free-will in the salvation of man. Pelagianism was the main heresy of the West, as Arianism of the East. Hence it was to have

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been expected that, inasmuch as the discussions of the Oriental clergy concerned matters farther removed from human ken than those which agitated their Western brethren, so they should lead to more vehement polemics, and allow more scope for what we have seen to be the natural re-action towards a secluded and meditative life. To convince ourselves that such was in truth the case, we have only to turn to the sanguinary church chronicles of Alexandria and Constantinople.

The question then occurs,—since the causes which promoted monachism in the East existed to a far less degree in the West, to what motive are we to refer the unquestionably rapid spread of asceticism throughout Italy and Gaul? The answer may, we think, be found in the peculiar social condition of the Western Empire. The utter and speedy dislocation of the body politic of the Empire, prior to the barbarian invasion, extended with equally fatal results to every class and rank in society. The burdens of the laity increased in proportion as their estimation and wealth diminished. Meanwhile the prosperity and immunities of the clergy became more apparent as those of every other class of the community vanished; and the secular spirit was gradually overcome by the greater vigour of spiritual development. Thus the ascetic tendencies, which in the East appear to have been fostered by the strengthening of the bonds uniting man to the invisible world, flourished in the West by the elevation of those which connected him with secular life. Accordingly, it appears that the glades of the Apennines

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and the wilds of Gaul were peopled by hermits who in any other social state would have been the last to desert a scene of so many attractions. The spirit of the age, which manifested itself in Egypt by almost divine honors paid* to the uncouth figures whom the rumours of theologic war brought forth from the deserts of Nitria or Thebais, was displayed in Italy by the contempt and horror in which fugitives from the world were held even by their Christian contemporaries: for we may be assured that the loathing expressed by the heathen poet† Rutilius Numatianus for the monks of Capraria was shared by believers and unbelievers alike. We may be excused if, on hearing of the strange and unchristian excesses to which fanaticism urged the Oriental monks, we partake of the same feelings; but, looking at the consequences of Western monasticism, posterity has pronounced a very different verdict. The emergencies of succeeding centuries have not given the same glory to asceticism in the East which it acquired during the Teutonic invasions of the West; and fate denied to Greece the reforming hand

* As when Antony appeared in the streets of Alexandria during the Arian persecution of Athanasius.

† Ipsi se monachos Graio cognomine dicunt,
Quod soli nullo vivere teste volunt.
Munera fortunæ metuunt, dum damna verentur.
Quisquam sponte miser, ne miser esse queat?
Quænam perversi rabies tam stulta cerebri,
Dum mala formides, nec bona posse pati?
De Reditu I. 441.

[ap. Wernsdorf *Poet. Lat. Min.* v. 155. Altenburg. 1788], and see Augustin. *Ep.* 48.

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of a Benedict. It is to the social causes we have above alluded to, as well as to the less mystical character of Western religion, that must be attributed the practical character so early assumed by the cœnobitic fraternities of Gaul and Italy. The men who founded them had in many cases fled not so much *out of* the world, as *away from* the world, and pursued, when beyond the reach of interruption, schemes of civilization and philanthropy of which their contemporaries were not worthy[1]. But of more weight than the restraints of national character or of a forbidding climate were the guardian counsels and moderation of such men as Ambrose and Augustine[2];

[1] The mountains of Switzerland seem to have abounded in hermits, holding no intercourse with the barbarians, but yet doubtless acting in some measure as forerunners of the more active missionaries. Thus in the life of St Gall we read of persons who were probably remnants of a Church scattered by Teutonic inroads. Something too was done by them towards cultivating the land and clearing the woods, the practical spirit of the West shewing itself in strong contradistinction to Eastern asceticism.

[2] See for instance Augustine's letter (*Ep.* 48) to the monks of Capraria, already referred to: "Si quam operam vestram mater Ecclesia desideraverit, nec elatione avida suscipiatis nec blandiente desidia respuatis, &c. * * Memineritis nullum locum esse, ubi non possit laqueos tendere qui timet ne revolemus ad Deum; et inimicum omnium bonorum cujus captivi fuimus judicemus, nullamque nobis esse perfectam requiem cogitemus, donec transeat iniquitas, et in judicium justitia convertatur. * * Ipsa est enim actio recti itineris, quæ oculos semper habet ad Dominum, quoniam ipse evellet de laqueo pedes. Talis actio nec frangitur negotio, nec frigida est otio, nec turbulenta nec marcida est; nec audax nec fugax; nec præceps nec jacens. Hæc agite, et Deus pacis erit vobiscum."

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who, while they were well aware of the causes which turned the minds of men to retirement and contemplation, and ever sought to protect their disciples against the seducing influences of worldly pride, were equally conscious of the no less fatal power of false humility. They were skilled to trace, through the seeming subjugation of the flesh, that unconquerable haughtiness of soul, which placed the severity of monastic discipline above the purest faith, and taught the meanest anchorite to look down upon the most dignified of churchmen. It was in no small measure owing to the temperate zeal of these fathers that the monastic system flourished in the purity it subsequently for a time maintained in the Western world, and that the public mind in Gaul and Italy was prepared for the benefits it received from the foundations of Cassian and Benedict. For assuredly it is no violation of the spirituality of Protestantism to look with admiration on the less extravagant form assumed by the monasticism of the West before it sunk under accumulated corruptions; and an impartial observer, not forgetting the difference in social relations during the fifth and the sixteenth centuries, may find as much to praise among the monks of the former period as he may to censure among those of the latter. That separation of the contemplative and the active principles in religion, which twelve centuries later was nominal and unmeaning because answering to no spiritual or intellectual requirement of the age, was true in theory and productive of noble results amid all the turmoil of barbarian inroads.

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It symbolized—imperfectly, it is true, but evidently to all men—that prominent virtue of exalted Christianity, by which independently and in spite of all outward action the seed once sown in the heart is preserved from pernicious influences, and fostered into full productiveness. It stood forward a type of the immutability of a faith, which, while empires rose and sunk and the very foundations of society were overturned, remained unmoved, teaching the same great axioms to the unlettered Goth which it had inculcated on the philosophic Greek.

We have enlarged on the progress of monastic influence, not so much as considering it to have been a distinct branch of clerical action during its earlier career, but rather with a view to the time when, in spite of its many inherent vices, it was not only incorporated with the Church, but became one of the principal supports of Christianity itself. The next chronological division of our subject will present to us monasticism engaged in its more memorable and peculiar work, transmitting to future more worthy recipients the intellectual trophies of preceding generations. We shall see in the organization of the monkish fraternities by the great Benedict their gradual separation from the laity, and shall be able with more strictness to include them within our peculiar province.

We have thus investigated the moral and intellectual influence of the clergy on their followers, from the period when the principles learnt in humiliation came to be practised among the seductions of exaltation to that

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when they stood prepared by a long contact with the world to act more effectually on the Teutonic nations. We must now turn to view their action on the political condition of the Roman Empire during the period of its final annihilation in the West and of its decrepitude in the East.

Later ecclesiastical historians have frequently placed in a strong light the deleterious action on the clerical body of a state-system long exposed to so many corrupting influences; but they appear scarcely to have bestowed sufficient attention on the reciprocal operation of the Church in checking or remedying abuses and postponing the approaching downfall of the Imperial polity. Wholly to deny any such action would be to imagine that the principles of Christian Truth, which had operated with so much power on the social framework of the community, were unavailing in a more public sphere.

It is unquestionably true that the indefiniteness of the union between Church and State during the reign of Constantine was productive of evil consequences in so far as it offered to the priesthood almost irresistible temptations to forget primitive purity in employing their spiritual authority for mere worldly purposes: but at the same time we must remember in how many cases the clerical power thus acquired stood opposed to that of the state as mitigating the severity and injustice of an arbitrary government. It would have been surprising if, at a period when no one worthy of the title of statesman

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assisted at the Imperial Councils, the exaltation of Christianity had taken place so as to preserve the necessary distinction between the influence of the clergy on their leading disciples as individuals and as rulers. We have already alluded to the moral authority possessed by the prelates over Constantine himself in matters ecclesiastical, and proof is not wanting that, not at the Capital alone but in every province of the Empire, the civil officers paid, even in the exercise of their ordinary functions, a tacit respect to the injunctions and reprimands of their spiritual guides. Without referring to such more splendid examples as the excommunication of Theodosius by Ambrose, or the successful intercession of the Bishop Flavianus with the same Emperor in behalf of the offending citizens of Antioch, we may content ourselves with the positive injunctions of two great Councils* in Spain and Gaul at the commencement of the fourth century, by one of which the civil functionary was prohibited from entering the church during the continuance of his office, and by the other was so far subject to episcopal authority as to be liable to instant excommunication if he failed to carry out on the judgment-seat the principles which in private he professed. Although such interference must have been often brought into play unwarrantably, yet, if we remember into how deep degradation the Roman administration had fallen

* The Councils of Elvira [Can. 56. ap. Routh. *Rell. Sac.* IV. 269. ed. 2.] (A. D 305) and Arles [Can. 7. *ibid.* 308.] (A.D. 314). See Neander's *Church History.* Vol. III. p. 200 (Ed. Bohn).

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under the Pagan Emperors, we must be convinced that it acquired a not insignificant elevation from such zealous supervision on the part of the priesthood. We shall find, moreover, that in this respect as in many others the maxims established under the Roman power were carried out even more energetically by the barbarian monarchs: for, whereas in the fourth century the censorship thus exercised by the prelates was indirect and purely ecclesiastical, the sixth beheld it, especially in Spain, occupying a recognized place in the legislation of Europe.

Indeed it may be broadly asserted that the establishment of the Christian faith by Constantine formed an era in the political as well as in the religious history of the world; for, ever since the Augustan age, the despotic power of the Emperor had been assuming a more unmitigated and revolting form; the popular spirit, which in better days would have prompted an active resistance, sunk as the vices and injustice of the court assumed a deeper dye. During no reigns had the depravity of the rulers and the political insignificance of the ruled been more apparent than in those of the predecessors and rivals of Constantine. Whatever excess of political sway, again, might fall into clerical hands, was at any rate exercised by men of fixed principles and disciplined intellects[1]; by men, moreover, who, as they had in general risen from the people and owed their

[1] See the testimony of the pagan Nectarius to Augustine (Aug. *Ep.* 90).

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elevation to their intrinsic merits, could not for the most part do otherwise than act in antagonism to the caprices of hereditary tyranny.

But in order more fully to appreciate the action of the sacerdotal order on the decaying Imperial system throughout Europe, we must obtain a previous insight into the political condition of the vast Roman provinces, and review the gradual alterations introduced, more particularly in the lands of the West, by a long course of selfish mismanagement.

The whole political and social history of Rome presents an instance, to which we know no parallel, of a series of traditional maxims of statecraft carried out amid circumstances the most various and nations the most remote. The infant republic, itself a flourishing municipality, soon learnt to respect, not only the immemorial Latian customs, but its own manifest interests, by framing the constitution of every one of its subject states on the same municipal model: and the citizens of many an Italian township, while they beheld the outward machinery of government unchanged and the old social distinctions permanent as ever, might forget their dependence on the great original at Rome, or were reminded of it only by the exercise of privileges before unknown. But it could scarcely have been foreseen by the most ambitious believer in the destined supremacy of the "gens togata," that the system which had originated in the secluded valleys of central Italy was to be applied, and to all appearance successfully so, to every

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one of the unpolished tribes of Western Europe. Yet so it unquestionably was, for, eight centuries after the double throne had first been raised in the Roman Forum, and a proud aristocracy had exulted over the triumph of the Senate, we find the cities of remotest Gaul groaning under the authority of as unscrupulous "duumviri," and suffering from the increasing immunities of a more numerous senatorial order. And assuredly of all the many systems created by the ingenuity of statesmen or conquerors none was ever more secure for the superior class, and none ever more inevitably pernicious to the inferior one. The results closely consequent on the extension of Roman domination throughout Italy had been reproduced, no less fatally, over the whole surface of the Empire; and nowhere more so than in those countries from which may be traced so much of what is peculiar in modern civilization. Gaul and Spain, where the legions had experienced such a resistance as can proceed only from the energetic will of a free and united population, had been plunged into the lowest depths of misery, aggravated, rather than palliated, by the mask of a meretricious culture. In those countries, as in Italy, reformation had been rendered hopeless by the utter disappearance of the old independent agricultural class; while, in its stead, countless gangs of slaves extracted from the soil such scanty produce as can alone be looked for by the employers of compulsory labour. Among the influential classes, too, the disease was as painfully apparent. All ancient patriotism had vanished; as vanish

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it must from among men who, confining their political views to the limits of a narrow municipality, were taught by the whole system under which they lived to expect orders, defenders, and, if need were, punishment, from the Capital alone. And not only had the moral dislocation of society proceeded so far as to annihilate all regard to Imperial interests and to ruin public spirit throughout Europe, but the unnatural restrictions of Roman legislation had effected such a separation of class from class as has never been equalled, even in the most unpropitious age of decaying feudalism. For the gradual extinction of the middle class, on which alone can society be securely based, had exposed the possessors of property to all the burdens without any of the highest honors of colonial government. The unvarying policy of the Empire selected administrators of enlightened provinces as exclusively from the precincts of Rome itself as when vice-consuls or proctors were delegated to restrain or conquer the barbarous transalpine nations. Hence the Imperial patronage, so liberally lavished upon Rome, was restricted in the provinces to exemptions and monopolies; and small as the number of *curials*, or tax-paying proprietors, necessarily was, each extended immunity caused the burthens to fall with yet greater severity on those who were still exposed to them. An inseparable barrier was thus placed between the two upper ranks of society; for the privileged orders continued to rejoice in Imperial favour, and to accumulate wealth amid elsewhere increasing poverty, while the rate-payers, on the other hand,

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crushed by taxation, and prevented by the severity of penal legislation from rising above the station to which they had been born, were deprived of all those motives which tend to increase either the wealth or the population of a country[1].

Such were the political consequences of the unfortunate combination of an unprincipled government with a needy exchequer and a yet more needy people, when the fiat of Constantine added to the various and contending classes we have enumerated another, destined soon to exceed them all in social and political importance. From the very first it was evident that no event more propitious to every part of society could have occurred than that which thus elevated the clergy, enjoying the

[1] The following passages, quoted by Savaro on Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* v. 17), show how the provincials often preferred removing to poverty in the Gothic and Burgundian kingdoms to remaining under Roman misgovernment. "Ut inveniantur inter eos quidam Romani, qui malint inter barbaros pauperem libertatem quam inter Romanos tributariam solicitudinem sustinere." Orosius, [*Hist.*] vii. 41. "Itaque passim vel ad Gothos vel ad Bagaudas vel ad alios ubique dominantes barbaros migrant, et commigrasse non pœnitet; malunt enim sub specie captivitatis vivere liberi quam sub specie libertatis esse captivi." Salvian. [*De gub. Dei.*] v. [t. i. p. 170. ed. Ritters. 1623.] "Unde et hucusque Romani, qui in regno Gothorum consistunt, adeo amplectuntur, ut melius sit illis cum Gothis pauperes vivere quam inter Romanos potentes esse et grave jugum tributi portare." Isidor. *Chron.* ær. ccccxlvii. Sidonius (*Ep.* vii. 12), in congratulating his friend Ferreolus on his appointment to the see of Arles, celebrates his previous popularity as prefect, "quia sic habenas Galliarum moderarere, ut possessor exhaustus tributario jugo relevaretur."

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full sunshine of Imperial partiality, and coming into official and effective contact with every class of citizens alike; for the lower orders beheld in them teachers of a religion without respect of persons, and looked to them alone for support and protection; while it could hardly be considered degrading to the proudest upholder of ancestral rank to submit to the authority of men before whom the majesty of the Emperor himself did not scruple to bow. There are several remarkable points in the constitution assigned to clerical power by Constantine and his successors, which if we examine minutely, we shall find that however much and however justly they have been made the subject of objections by succeeding generations, they were yet in more respects than one singularly adapted to render the Gospel truths acceptable to the men among whom they were planted.

For example, it has been made matter of regret that the principle of an Established Church was not more fully carried out by Constantine; that, by omitting all systematic provision for the clergy, and at the same time throwing open to them channels of vast wealth from other sources, he exposed the piety of a scarcely organized Church to all the dangers and unavoidable evils of the voluntary system, as well as to the temptations of an enlarged revenue and of extended intercourse with a semi-pagan court and aristocracy. Yet from our investigation of the political conditions of the Roman world we may perhaps find less cause to mourn his having followed a course so much and so reasonably at variance

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with all our modern ideas. For, as we have already mentioned, the Imperial exchequer was recruited by the contribution of the "curiales" alone; the highest order enjoyed a full immunity; while the lowest of all, the slaves, were looked upon by the law merely as goods in the possession of their masters. Now, had the burden of clerical revenues been so adjusted as to fall, like the other rates, exclusively on the "curiales", we could hardly have expected to find the Christian religion reverenced by an oppressed class who found it accompanied by additions to an already intolerable load. Few and paltry must have been the converts drawn from among men to whom the ministers of spiritual salvation would have been the harbingers of temporal ruin. If, on the other hand, the necessary support had been demanded alike from the privileged and the unprivileged, the burden would no doubt have fallen with less severity on the latter, but the former, pampered by long indulgence, would doubtless have regarded with an evil eye an institution which so rudely broke in upon all their cherished immunities, and which must have seemed to them the sure forerunner of a thorough social revolution. Either of these results would unquestionably have been fatal to the successful progress of Christianity, and it appears to us that one or other would have as unquestionably followed from the organization, by the central government, of a complete tithe-system. It is true that, as we have previously mentioned, such a mode of clerical support was already in operation, but it was owing, not to any Impe-

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rial edict, but solely to the private influence and expostulations of the priesthood, who thus drew their support in this respect mainly from voluntary contributions.

The concentration, moreover, of power in episcopal hands was, in the strange political condition of the Roman world, peculiarly adapted to further the influences of Christianity in the provinces, for it corresponded to an important change in their social relations,—the extermination of population in the country, and its accumulation within the shelter of the towns.

In the manner, again, of episcopal elections, although we may regret its uncertainty and irregularity, we shall nevertheless find much that was suited to the vague administration, partly municipal and partly centralized, which prevailed in the cities of the Western Empire previous to its final dissolution. An interesting illustration of the growing clerical power in such elections, as well as of the relations in which the clergy stood to their flocks, may be derived from a letter of Sidonius Apollinaris*, who in writing to his friend Domnulus relates how, on the vacancy of the see of Châlons, the clergy and people of that city, unable to decide between the not very legitimate claims and promises of the candidates, entrusted the selection to the neighbouring prelates of Lyons and Autun[1]; and from which it appears that the

* *Ep.* iv. 25.

[1] "Quod ubi viderunt sanctus Patiens et sanctus Euphronius, qui rigorem firmitatemque sententiæ sanioris præter odium gratiamque primi tenebant, consilio cum coepiscopis prius clam communicato quam palam prodito strepituque furentis turbæ despecto,

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"oppidani" had not yet been deprived of that share in the nomination of their bishops, which had undoubtedly been a privilege of the faithful from the very earliest days. A more accurate examination of the effects produced by the suddenly increased episcopal authority will convince us that, however pernicious to the religious progress of Europe it may have been, and however numerous may have been the germs of future corruption laid during the period of its progress, it was notwithstanding, politically speaking, eminently suited to the age in which it took its rise. The municipal administration of the Roman provinces, which had for so many years, even while the Empire yet stood and flourished unbroken, been connected by a but slender link with the central power, fell at once into the most complete and incurable disorganization when that central power ceased to be worthy of its name. The prospect which opened upon Europe when Italy was finally occupied by the barbarians received

jactis repente manibus arreptum * sanctum Joannem * *, dissonas inter partium voces, * stupentibus factiosis, erubescentibus malis, acclamantibus bonis, reclamantibus nullis, collegam sibi consecravere." The nature of episcopal elections in Gaul at this period is illustrated by other letters of Sidonius: in one (vii. 5) he describes the difficulties in the election of a bishop of Bourges, and calls for the assistance of Agrœcius Bishop of Sens to reconcile the conflicting parties; in another (vii. 8) he consults Euphronius Bishop of Autun as to whether or not he should appoint Simplicius to the vacant office, in accordance with the wishes of the people; and in a third (vii. 9) he encloses to Perpetuus Bishop of Tours the speech which he had delivered before the clergy and people at Bourges, in electing Simplicius.

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additional gloom from the circumstance that the whole policy of Rome had for centuries tended to weaken all public spirit and administrative capacity elsewhere, and to widen the field of Imperial patronage by concentrating in the capital such poor remnants of ancient talent as yet lingered on the earth. Accordingly, when the reins of civil sway were dropping from the weak hands of Roman deputies to subside into the yet more enervate grasp of provincial aristocracy, it was of inestimable importance for the preservation even of the very elements of the old civilization, that men not wholly unfitted for such a task discovered themselves in a very different quarter. The Christian clergy, already accustomed by ecclesiastical tradition, as well as by the impulses of a fervent and politic piety, to look upon themselves as the dispensers of moral truth in matters secular as well as in matters spiritual, succeeded, not unwillingly, to the decaying civil authority: and we find in the chronicles of the fifth and sixth centuries many instances in which the Bishop of a provincial town wielded over his flock a sway far more absolute than could have been dreamt of by the most ambitious of decemvirs or proconsuls. This intimate bond of union between the Bishops and the Roman municipalities will fall more directly under our glance when we come to speak of their relations to the Teutonic conquerors of Europe, but it deserves our attention in a very marked manner now, inasmuch as the period immediately before us seems to have been that which exposed the Roman civilization to the most pressing

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dangers. It appears to us that the political influence of the clergy performed no more signal service to humanity than when, by consolidating within themselves the innumerable separate municipal societies forming, as it were, the skeleton of Roman majesty, it armed them against the first and most critical shock of barbarian invasion. Much as we must ever attribute to the inherent vigour and practical spirit of the Italian institutions, we may not unjustly doubt whether we should be, as we are, living on the ruins of the Roman Empire, had not Christianity supplied in the hour of need both a motive for union and leaders who knew how to make the most of the spirit they had fostered.

And let it not be imagined that, in the establishment of what may seem to us an excess of priestly authority, violence was offered to any general aspirations after a fuller liberty, or that the clergy of the fifth century had learnt what their successors practised with only too much success, the association of the exaltation of their order with religious and political oppression. On the contrary, civilized man had long been prepared for the introduction of a purer faith by the excesses of a debased materialism, and had been made willing to accept the authority of ecclesiastical rulers by a conviction of the increasing separation between the principles which ruled the world and those of moral rectitude. The inhabitants, for example, of remote districts of Spain, Gaul, or Africa, long deprived of all voice in the election of their civil rulers, and made aware of the frequent changes in Impe-

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rial despotism only by the civil bloodshed which preceded them, had every reason to rejoice in the rise of episcopal authority. Instead of the hard rule of strangers, they lived under the less imposing but gentler influence of their clerical fellow-citizens; instead of suffering by the caprice of each successive aspirant to the Imperial throne, they paid a willing obedience to the paternal counsels of men whom they could not but reverence, since they had themselves participated in their election. The most abject fraction of the population, the agricultural serfs, looked for their only protection from the clergy, and learnt to cling to the inviolable sanctity of the altar and the intrepid zeal of its ministers: while the "curiales," crushed as they were by repeated extortions, found some relief in the consciousness that they might rise above all human tyranny, by enrolling themselves among the spiritual lords of the earth. The oppressed, if any consolation could be for them below, might find it in looking forward to the assured triumph of nobler principles of morality and government; while the oppressors were constrained to look with awe on men, who like themselves had long enjoyed every immunity, and were establishing their claims to the guidance of the flock in more serious contests than the doubtful wranglings of theological councils. Another point seems to be worthy of our notice, in which the beneficial influence of Churchmen in some measure compensated for the effects of civil misgovernment. The annihilation of the old rural inhabitants had led to an utter isolation of the towns and

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circumscribing of the political horizon throughout the Empire, which we, in these days of rapid interchange of ideas, can with difficulty picture to ourselves. This defect, fatal to anything like a truly national feeling, and which threatened, more than any other political calamity of the time, to check all intellectual progress, inasmuch as it lay beyond all help from the enervate civil constitution, was in some degree remedied by the frequency of ecclesiastical intercourse between politically remote localities. Politics, in our sense of the word, had long ceased to occupy the popular mind; patriotism was no more; nations, as such, had no existence. It was becoming evident that this extinction of all the nobler ends of being, this practical materialism, must ultimately involve a total loss of all the old energetic discipline which the traditions of many generations had handed down from Athens and Alexandria to Bordeaux, Treves, and Seville. Indeed we cannot conceal from ourselves that if perilled civilization had not found in the unity and spirited action of the clergy a substitute for political motives long forgotten, Europe would have relapsed into utter and hopeless barbarism. The only connecting link between severed nations and cities was that of religion, because the only active ideas they possessed in common were such as they embodied in their creed. The nations of the West had long ceased to turn with any interest to the civil affairs of Rome or Constantinople; but the former city was rapidly raising itself to be the central point of theological discussion, as it had been of political

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sway. Indeed, every one of the Western lands resounded with scarcely any other excitement than what was raised by the conflicts of orthodox and heterodox divines; and so great was the impetus imparted to intellectual pursuits, and the logical acumen derived from such metaphysical speculations as the great Pelagian controversy, or from such more purely theological discussions as suited the minds of Oriental Churchmen, that we are almost tempted to forget the evil consequences of such misdirected powers as those of Pelagius and his followers, and the perils of the true faith in the conflict with heresy, in our rejoicing that the European nations were preserved in theological subjects from that stagnant carelessness which had befallen them in those of politics.

The whole history of the intellectual progress of man scarcely presents to us a more remarkable proof of the superiority possessed by spiritual over material agencies in the minds of individuals and nations, than we discover by comparing the religious with the secular life during the fifth and sixth centuries. In the latter, every bond tending to combine country with country, and city with city, had been loosened; in the former, new connections were perpetually established, by which the opinions of Central Asia were brought into contact and conflict with those of Western Europe. No land, however remote it might be from all other excitement, could be silent in the great theological debates; a voice from the deserts of the Upper Nile might be heard by the zealous priesthood of the British Church, and the slopes of extreme Atlas

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might not unwillingly be aroused by the challenge echoing from the dwellers by primitive Ararat. The most convincing testimony of the extent to which theological questions were made the means of communication, from one extremity of the Empire to the other, is to be derived from the extant correspondences of such men as Augustine, Jerome, and Basil. They reveal to us all the vast erudition of their authors, the interest excited throughout the Roman world by the great theological questions of the age, and the decisive authority possessed by the leading Fathers of the Church among the faithful of every land. The Bishop of Hippo, in particular, acquired a moral influence over the Churches of the West scarcely inferior to the more recognized authority of a Roman pontiff; he was referred to, not only to settle disputed points of metaphysical or exegetical speculation, but to support by the weight of his name and the gravity of his judgment ecclesiastical discipline and ministerial purity.

But we must consider these frequent communications, which united the faithful of lands so remote, in a political as well as in a theological and moral light. The consequences they produced on the fifth century were analogous to what the frequent pilgrimages to Rome, and the universal excitement of the Crusades, undoubtedly effected for ensuing ages. The clergy in secluded districts of Gaul* traversed inhospitable lands to lay their difficulties before Jerome at Bethlehem or Paulinus at Nola; and the

* See the remarks of Guizot, *Civilisation en France*, lib. IV. vol. i. p. 108.

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early Church of our own island appears, as well from the legends of its early saints as from its more authentic records, to have been peculiarly connected with the remoter countries of the East. The same results we may with justice attribute to the frequency of œcumenical or provincial councils; for we may readily believe that the Bishops of Spain, Gaul, or Egypt, after joining the multitude of Church dignitaries who flocked to the shores of the Bosphorus or the Adriatic, returned to diffuse not merely the dry speculations of abstruse metaphysics but some remembrance of old Imperial splendour, and of the inspiriting traditions which yet lingered amid the ruins of ancient institutions.

In the preceding pages, while examining the political benefits conferred upon Christendom by an educated and united clergy, we have bestowed the greater share of our attention on the Western Empire, both because to us the steps of that process by which Roman civilization and Christianity were amalgamated with the Germanic spirit present one of the most instructive of historical problems, and because the Eastern world early supplied more frequent instances of the perversions of our faith than of its legitimate action. Such, moreover, is the inherent changelessness of Oriental life, and such the uninteresting repose of social and political forms under the Byzantine sovereigns, that the terms in which we have characterized clerical action during the earlier centuries may be applied, though with diminished force, to those which succeeded; whereas, in the lands of the West, as we shall see, the case was a very different one.

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[CHAPTER IV.]

In investigating the progress of clerical influence, we have now reached that era, with which, as far as the modern history of Europe is concerned, it may in a certain sense be said to begin. Viewing, as we most naturally do, the ecclesiastical history of the Roman Empire with a more especial reference to the barbarian monarchies founded on its ruins, we may discover in every step, in every change of Church government or relations throughout the south of Europe, a providential preparation for the new position in which the clergy were to be placed amidst the invading bands of the North. Such considerations we have introduced into the preceding section of our subject, though they would perhaps have been more peculiarly adapted for the present one. For if, judging from the results which have attended the advance of the Christian faith, we were to ask ourselves what during the first ten centuries of its history had been the great mission entrusted to its teachers, the answer would discover itself, not amid the decay of an ever corrupt polity, but among the free and healthy societies under which the Roman Empire sank. Christian organization, indeed, seems to have been destined to effect during the first four centuries a work principally preparatory. The efforts of the most systematically disciplined priesthood the world ever saw were never directed towards the political reformation of a state so rapidly verging to

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complete dissolution; and the fall of the Empire continued not the less steadily or the less surely that it contained within itself an element whose destined work was the amelioration of the human race. Private, and to a certain extent public, morality had, as we have seen, progressively improved under the influence of the ministers of religion, but no share of the activity and integrity which animated the Church had gone to alter the traditional principles of a corrupt administration: and, even when surrounded by a favouring court and people, the clergy, as if conscious that their full powers were displayed to greatest perfection in the day of adversity, seemed to be awaiting the universal revolution which was to call them into a new and wider sphere of action.

In the preceding portion of this essay, we have traced the varying relations of the priesthood to a people old in cultivation, and long hardened by its attendant vices; we have seen them bring the great truths of the religion which is by faith into collision with the multiform theories of human ingenuity: for the future we shall observe their intercourse with the rough but athletic society which, bursting from the forests of Germany, was interfused among the fragments of the Empire it subverted; we shall see them conquering the lingering resistance of Paganism, and accustoming the unschooled barbarian intellects to the laws and literature as well as to the systematic hierarchy of Rome. As they had not passed uninjured through the temptations of their first prosperity, so neither can we expect to find them uncorrupted by a

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still greater elevation. They had long been the sole religious guides of the world, while they had possessed but in part the glories of political, legal, and moral science; but the sixth and seventh centuries beheld them the undisputed dispensers of every branch of knowledge alike. Exposed as they were to the greatest of all dangers, the temptation of intellectual pride, what wonder if they forgot that they were ministers of a kingdom which is invisible, and if, neglecting their more legitimate influence on the destinies of individuals, they sought to exercise an intriguing sway over the fate of nations? It is unquestionably true that, while in the age of persecution we can discern the first tokens of many a failing, the most fatal period of clerical corruption was that when the kingdoms of modern Europe were founded. The mighty poet of republican Florence has seen the first germ of the calamities of Papal ambition in the endowment of the Roman See by Constantine*, but he might have found a more historical origin for them than this in the lavish piety of barbarian sovereigns. They, animated by one of the noblest tendencies of our nature, prostrated themselves with all their victories and spoils before the religious principle they had learnt from their subjects; and, willing to acknowledge a supreme Imperial head in spiritual as well as in temporal matters, they humbled

* Ahi, Constantin, di quanto mal fu matre,
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote,
Che da te prese il primo ricco patre!
DANTE, *Inferno*, XIX. 115.

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themselves readily before all the assumptions of Papal domination. Even the monarchs of the Lombards, whom proximity might have taught, as it did their republican successors, to despise the thunders of the Vatican, manifested the sincerity of their conversion from Arianism, by exalting the Bishop of Rome as the supreme Head of all Churches and the wielder of the Canon Law*.

But without straying beyond our more immediate province to notice such inevitable abuses, we shall assuredly find no lack of facts to convince us that, while fertile lands were devoted to unsparing desolation, and ancient nations seemed to have vanished amid the conflicting floods of barbarism, one power yet remained, immoveable amid material shocks, because resting on no material foundation. While we contemplate during these ages of gloom change after change throughout the whole Roman Empire, and mourn over the disappearance of venerable names, the mind must ever repose with peculiar pleasure on the constant grandeur of the ecclesiastical edifice, and be led, as it always is in the hour of greatest peril, to acknowledge the supremacy, in the affairs of nations, of the spiritual over the temporal.

The period on which we are about to enter is, as we have already stated, comprised between the fall of the Western Empire (A.D. 476) and the accession of Charlemagne to the undivided Frankish throne (A.D. 771).

* See a letter in the Laws of Liutprand, King of the Lombards, lib. v. c. 4. ap. Canciani *Leges Barbarorum*, t. I. p. 110.

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This division, which may seem to have reference rather to secular than to ecclesiastical events, is yet on the whole more adapted for our purpose than any other; for although the internal conditions of Church government and doctrine may have undergone considerable fluctuations, yet during these three centuries the clergy found themselves in contact with the same leading principles of government, and occupied a similar position relatively to the other members of the social body. The traditions of Imperial Rome were preserved, and its mere name had weight with tribes long accustomed to set at nought its sway[1]. The rude lineaments of barbaric society remained for the most part unchanged, encompassing without extinguishing the ruins of Italian institutions[2]; while among them all the clergy, protected by the statutes of Constantine or Theodosius, and maintaining, or professing to maintain, unaltered the whole purity of patristic discipline, seemed by their own immobility only to show the

[1] "Cum jam Protadius genere Romanus vehementer ab omnibus in palatio veneraretur,...patricius ordinatur instigatione Brunichildis" (Fredegarii *Chronicon*, c. 24, printed by Ruinart in his ed. of Gregory of Tours. col. 605): so Protadius is succeeded by one Claudius "genere Romanus" (c. 28), and Vulfus by one Richomeris "Romanus genere" (c. 29): and the language used of Carloman and Pepin, when they quell a revolt of the Gascons, is "Romanos proterunt" (ibid. 3rd continuat. c. 111).

[2] As a proof how distinctly the nationalities were preserved in the reign of Dagobert, we have among a list of 10 army-leaders or dukes, "Chairaardus ex genere Francorum, Chramnelinus ex genere Romanorum, Willibadus patricius ex genere Burgundionum, Aigyna ex genere Saxonum" (ibid. c. 78).

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velocity of the uncertain eddies by which all secular things were whirled along. The reign of Charlemagne, on the other hand, forms the beginning of a new era; for the unwieldy extension of his empire, and the hereditary transmission of provincial jurisdictions, first apparent under him, were among the principal causes of that gradual amalgamation of Roman and Teutonic customs ultimately productive of the feudal system.

This section of our subject, then, may be said to embrace the interval between ancient and mediæval history. We shall have to view the society of European nations during the momentous transition from Imperialism to feudalism: and, though the striking examples of clerical power may be less frequent than during either of the two adjacent periods, though we may have neither an Ambrose nor a Hildebrand, yet the moral and social workings of the priesthood will at no time appear in a more interesting form than in this the most critical passage of European history.

We turn, then, in the first place, to the *moral* influence of the clergy. This portion of our task, facilitated during the Roman period by the more or less impartial compilations of so many contemporary historians and theologians, presents itself to us now under a very different aspect. We are no longer guided by the voluminous writings of the Church Fathers, from whose inexhaustible resources have been, and will be, drawn such abundant information concerning the government, discipline, and doctrine of the Church of the first five

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centuries. The historians and antiquaries whose works throw light upon the period now before us are mere sapless chroniclers, either cursed with the narrowmindedness of the cloister, or too intent upon secular vanities to have given any serious thoughts to the hidden causes of the events they record. In this emergency, however, very considerable support may be derived from the somewhat miscellaneous collections of statutes, which, under the titles of the Salic, Alemannic, Lombard, Burgundian, and Visigothic Codes, display a strange but instructive medley of the legal traditions of Rome and Germany, of the Forum and the Mallum. And the information we derive from such sources as these may be said to be both direct and indirect; direct, in so far as we learn from the special enactments what must have been the state of public feeling and morality in which they originated and resulted; indirect, in so far as the general tone of each entire code affords a clue to ascertain the enlightenment or ignorance of the tribe which made use of it.

In treating of the exaltation of the Christian clergy under Constantine, we have alluded to the more remote consequences of his measures on the minds of the Teutonic invaders. We then saw that many a deviation from primitive simplicity, dangerous though it might justly seem to the integrity of the Roman faith, was productive of consequences the most momentous on tribes who reverenced principally the pomp and mysterious ceremony attendant on the faith which they embraced, and would have scorned to bow down before priests or

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altars whose faultless humility merely recalled the rude shrines of their native forests. It is true that in many cases their nominal conversion had taken place before they had been made acquainted with the majesty of the Italian clergy; that, owing to the exertions of an Ulphilas, Christianity had been diffused among the Gothic hordes long before they were tempted by the promised spoils of the South: but we are justified by all the records of the barbarian inroads in asserting that such conversions added rather to the glory of the Christian missionaries than to the security of the conquered lands; and that the truth was often preached to and received by the monarchs long before it had any effect on their people. The piety of Origen* had anticipated the period when the barbarians were universally to yield to the advance of the word of God, and to acknowledge the civilizing influences of Christianity; but he little foresaw that his vows were to be realized in the very centre of ancient cultivation, and that the barbarians and Scythians in whom he hoped to see the fruit of foreign missions were to be converted by the home exertions of the Italian clergy. We may, however, be persuaded that some faint respect for the faith of the conquered lurked in the breasts of the conquerors, from the vivid picture which Augustine† has

* [Εἰ γὰρ, ὡς λέγει Κέλσος, τὸ αὐτό μοι ποιήσειαν ἅπαντες, δηλονότι καὶ οἱ βάρβαροι, τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ θεοῦ προσελθόντες, νομιμώτατοι ἔσονται καὶ ἡμερώτατοι, καὶ πᾶσα μὲν θρησκεία καταλυθήσεται, μόνη δὲ ἡ Χριστιανῶν κρατήσει· ἥτις καὶ μόνη ποτὲ κρατήσει, τοῦ λόγου ἀεὶ πλείονας νεμομένου ψυχάς.] *C. Celsum*, viii. 68. [p. 423. ed. Spenc.]

† *De Civitate Dei*, lib. i. c. 1, &c.

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drawn of the reverence with which the followers of Alaric drew back from the Christian shrines, and extended an unwonted clemency to all, believers and unbelievers alike, who clustered round the sacred altars.

In order fully to appreciate the effects produced on those rude tribes by the efforts of the propagators of the Gospel, we must compare their customs and statutes, not with the civilization of Imperial Rome, but with the habits of the same tribes in their native wilds, as far as we can be made acquainted with them by means of the scanty allusions or sketches of the Latin writers: or we may arrive at the same result by contrasting the first great flood of invaders, after they had undergone for a few years the operation of Christianity, with those who subsequently were urged on in the same direction and by similar causes. Adopting the former of these methods, we shall have on the one hand the lawlessness, carelessness of human life, and idolatry which, in spite of all declamation on the nobleness of unfettered man, are ever indicative of a state in which all the worst passions of our nature have unlimited scope; on the other hand, though it may be that some rude virtues have perished with their kindred defects, yet reverence for law and a higher tone of public and private morality attest the continuance of an intercourse with ancient civilization and the softening influence of a pure religion. And let it not be imagined that the progress of the barbarian tribes in the arts and ideas of a higher life is to be attributed to the action of secular teachers, or to any tradi-

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tional remnants of mere Pagan philosophy; for the long succession of the heathen schools had come to an end, and not only the theology but even the law and literature (such as it was) of the age was exclusively in clerical hands. Indeed it cannot surprise us that in that tempestuous scene all the arts and sciences should take shelter in monasteries and churches, the only harbours of refuge from the surrounding barbarism; for, in proportion as the numbers and ferocity of the invaders increased, so the spiritual and intellectual energies of the world tended to flock towards those more enduring institutions which afforded, not only defence against the enemy, but the most effectual means of repelling the advancing darkness, and shortening the reign of brute force by extending the benefits of a civilizing religion.

If, again, we would adopt the second of the two modes of comparison we have spoken of, and contrast the tribes of earlier with those of later civilization, we have only to turn to the descriptions of the Saxon enemies of Charlemagne, of the inhospitable tribes among whom Boniface laboured and perished[1], or of the countless bands of marauders, whom the plains of Sclavonia or the islands and peninsulas of the North sent forth to the desolation of more favoured lands. It is by instituting such a parallel as this that we can most satisfactorily ascertain the results of those clerical exertions by which

[1] See the account (*Vita S. Wunebaldi*, cc. 12, 13. ap. Canis. *Ant. Lect.* ii. 129. ed. 1725) of the difficulties experienced at Heidenheim by Wunebald, brother of Boniface's coadjutor Willebald.

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the perils of a recurrence to savage life were actually averted from the European lands. And although it is undeniably fitting that we give due weight to the numerous writers who have represented in such strong colours the clerical corruptions of a degenerate age, that we acknowledge the pernicious influences of that system of expiatory offerings and ceremonies by which the too complying or lucre-loving among the priesthood pacified the consciences of their rude disciples, and the avaricious spirit which directed so much of the plunder of suffering lands into the capacious coffers of the Church; yet the most zealous opponents of Romanizing tendencies can hardly assert these to have been the principal and primary results of the collision of idolatry and ignorance with true religion and learning. Indeed, had such been the case, the nations of Germany would have lost as much in moral rectitude as they gained in temporal power by their conquests; for not only was the Church the most active element of society when the Western Empire fell, but it was the only element which could be said to be animated by a living principle or by fixed motives of action. That great corporation continued to exercise all its former privileges when all political bodies had fallen into the last stage of hopeless inanition. Its members rose and ruled above all other dignitaries, alike in the Imperial Court and in the meanest municipality. In a word, it alone was swayed by the settled maxims of a wise tradition, it alone understood what it was to demand and obtain the subjection of the mind.

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But the authority and immunities possessed by the priesthood under the Emperors were far below what they attained under the barbarian monarchs. The clergy under the Roman law had, it is true, possessed a full share of peculiar privileges, and as a corporate body they had enjoyed every favour which Imperial piety could suggest; but as individuals they were subject to the very same obligations and penalties as the laity. But with the German invaders was, as is well known, introduced into civilized Europe a new principle of jurisprudence, which asserted the strict nationality of judicial enactments, so that even the scattered members of each barbarian horde, whether Lombards, Burgundians, or Visigoths, could claim the right of being judged and punished according to the statutes of their ancestors[1]. This custom, which might at first sight have appeared perilous to the unity and stability of the clerical body, proved to be one of its main safeguards, and one of the principal sources of extended priestly influence. For the simple legislation of the invaders was utterly without means of supplying the numerous exigencies of hierarchical government, and the clergy, instead of being partitioned into as many separate churches as there were tribes in the European population, secured for themselves

[1] The *Life of St Leodger* (c. 4. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* ii. 331. Duchesne, *Hist. Franc. Scrip.* i. 602 c. Paris. 1636) mentions a demand made on King Childeric with reference to his three kingdoms, "ut uniuscujusque patriæ legem vel consuetudinem deberent sicut antiquitus judices conservare."

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undisturbed tranquillity under the provisions of the Roman law*. Thus it came to pass that both as ministers of holy things and as individuals they enjoyed privileges and legal protections to which even the noblest among their conquerors were strangers. Again and again do we find the Germanic legislators asserting broadly the general principle which placed under the statutes of the Theodosian code every member of the clerical body, whatever might be the language he spoke, or the tribe to which he belonged[1]. That this regulation was universally carried out, in spite of every inconvenience attending it, we may gather from a statute of the Lombard King Liutprand, by which he rules that, if a Lombard, the father of a family, enters the Church, he himself immediately becomes entitled to the privileges of a Roman, while his children continue to live under the enactments of their

* See the remarks of Savigny, *Geschichte des Römischen Rechts im Mittelalter*. Vol. i. pp. 115—118, and ii. 261.

[1] In proof of the fact that the clergy enjoyed the privileges of the Theodosian Code, Eccard (on *Leg. Ripuar.* lviii. 1. ap. Cancian. *Leg. Barb.* ii. 311) refers to Ludovicus Pius in '*Capit. Excerpt. ex Leg. Langob.* c. 5,' "'ut omnis ordo Ecclesiarum secundum Legem Romanam vivat: et sic inquirantur vel defendantur res ecclesiasticæ, ut emphiteuseos contractus, unde ecclesia damnum patiatur, non observetur, sed secundum Legem Romanam destruatur et pœna non solvatur.' Eadem habentur in '*Leg. Langob.* III. 1, § 37.' Vide Chartam editam a Durante Doria in '*Historia familiæ Trinciæ*, p. 90:' 'Anno ab incarnatione Domini nostri 1095, indictione tertia, mense Februarii; nos Presbyter Acto q. Berardi et Presbyter Joannes q. Joannis, qui professi sumus ex natione nostra legem vivere Langobardorum, sed nunc pro honore sacerdotii nostri videmur vivere legem Romanorum &c.'"

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forefathers*. The Anglo-Saxon juridical system of our own island appears to have been the only one where the churchman and the layman were distinguished by no difference of legal privileges†, and the fact may be easily accounted for, if we remember how entirely the old Roman customs were swept away by the Saxon conquest, and how completely every trace of British Christianity disappeared from the greater portion of the island.

Here, then, we discover a means of increasing priestly power, which, before the various national codes had been incorporated into systematized local ones, must have made itself universally felt. If the sacerdotal order had been broadly distinguished from the civil powers during the Empire, it was so far more now; for morality, laws, and language, while they combined to keep it separate from the Germanic world around, all tended to draw more closely than ever the bond which united it to the inhabitants of the old municipalities. The laws, which distinguished it from the strangers, identified it in all its interests with the "disjecta membra" of Imperial greatness. The Episcopal seats, unaltered by the change of rulers, conferred upon their occupants all the outward pomp, and far more than the moral influence, of the Roman prefects; for we read of roving hordes having more than once turned away with superstitious self-denial from walls whose only defence lay in the sanctity of their priestly protectors. The annals of Greece have recorded

* *Leges Langobardicæ*, v. c. 100. ap. Cancian., t. i. p. 138.

† See Palgrave's *English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 164.

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the efficient intervention of a present deity to avert from the Delphic fane the Persian and Scythian marauders; and in like manner, during the period before us, Christian Romans and superstitious idolaters were equally willing to recognize the immediate hand of the Lord in the preservation of his unfortunate people. It was the enthusiastic activity of a Christian Bishop, rather than any military prowess of the garrison, which snatched Orleans, the last bulwark of Gaul, as it was destined to be of France, from the grasp of Attila*, and the exulting piety of Augustine† could trace the especial finger of God in the slaughter of myriads of the followers of Rhadagaisus, while his credulity denied the loss of a single drop of Christian blood, and must have admired in the overthrow of the Gothic monarch a not less signal intervention of Providence than that which annihilated the host of Sennacherib[1]. Thus the zeal of a religious strife, which in

* See the graphic account given [chiefly from Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* ii. 7] by Gibbon (c. 35) of the prolonged defence of Orleans, maintained by the prayers and exhortations of its Bishop Anianus.

† *De Civitate Dei*, lib. v. c. 23.

[1] According to Gregory of Tours (*De Glor. Mart.* i. 13), when the city of Bazas in Aquitaine was being besieged by the Huns, "omni nocte sacerdos qui præerat circuibat psallendo et orabat; nec ab ullo auxilium nisi a Domini misericordia requirebat. Hortabatur omnes orare et non deficere, asserens humiles preces cœlorum januas penetrare." Meanwhile the barbarian king beheld a white-robed procession, with lights, encompassing the town in vision, and again a ball of fire descend upon it. The inhabitants denying any knowledge of either of these facts, the invader became conscious of their heavenly defenders, and left them. So also at

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a less enervated state of society might have rendered the clergy the saviours of the Empire from the Germans, as they afterwards were of the latter from the Saracens through the Crusades, was exerted only on rare and extreme emergencies, and we can already discern the rise of that fanatical cowardice which once and again relied on the protection of St Martin for the safety of his former see, and was reduced to trust in the intercession of St Ebbo to defend Sens against the Mussulman invaders*.

So close and influential was the bond uniting the clergy with those of their flocks who preserved their ancient appellation of Roman citizens; a bond which, if

the siege of Saragossa by Childebert and Clothaire, when the inhabitants marched round the walls bearing the tunic of St Vincent and offering up prayers, the besiegers were panic-stricken and retired (*Hist Franc.* iii. 29). According to Frodoard (*Hist. Eccl. Rem.* lib. i. c. 6. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 16—21, also in Couvenier's ed. of 1617, pp 26—31) the Vandals, while sacking Rheims, were struck with a heaven-sent panic, and left the city unplundered; but they had already massacred the heroic bishop Nicasius and his sister Eutropia. At a later period, according to a poetical annalist of Charlemagne's achievements (Poeta Saxo ap. Pertz, *Mon. Germ. Hist. Script.* t. i. p. 230), the Saxons attempting to burn a church built by St Boniface at "Frideslar" were thus repulsed:

"Hoc frustra nisos facinus complere nefandum
Invasit subito terror divinitus ingens,
Atque fuga turpi trepidos repedare coegit
Ad patriam, quos non hostes, non arma fugarunt."

See also the *Vita S. Galli* ap. Pertz, ii. 19.

* See Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, t. i. p. 220 and t. ii. p. 136. [ed. 1821].

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we suppose it, as we reasonably may, to have been co-existent with the nominal distinction between Roman and barbarian, must have continued to make itself felt even in those lands where the amalgamation of the several elements of society was most complete*.

But we find traces as satisfactory, though not so clearly defined, of clerical action in the moral condition of each of the newly-established nations. To hope, however, to discern their action on the shapeless jurisprudence of the earliest Frankish and Ostrogothic sovereigns would be in vain, for the primitive codes in use under those monarchs contain not the slightest allusion to what was rapidly becoming the most important member of the state. But if we must not expect direct indications of their influence on legislation in codes which were to apply to the laity alone, we are amply supplied with *indirect* evidence of the presiding co-operation of men far superior in legal knowledge and moral purity to the rude framers of the unsophisticated Gothic "Bye Laws†." For example,—considering only such laws as attest the early state of the connection between the clergy and laity,—in the preface to the ancient Salic Code‡, the Frankish

* Even the Visigothic Code, in a law published by King Recceswind, two centuries and a half subsequent to the origin of the monarchy, regulating the intermarriages of Visigoths with other nations, uses the term "Roman citizens." See *Leges Visigothorum*, III. [tit. i.] c. 1 [ap. Cancian. *Leg. Barb.* t. iv. p. 88]. See also a Constitution of Clothaire, King of the Franks, ap. Baluz. *Cap. Reg. Franc.* t. I. coll. 7—10.

† *Bellagines.*

‡ "Gens Francorum inclyta, auctore Deo condita, fortis in

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nation, "recently," as the words are, "converted to the Catholic faith," prides itself on its freedom from the taint of Arianism, and on having been specially moved by the Lord to seek the key of knowledge:—phrases which it is most natural to attribute to a clerical pen, and which may at any rate be admitted as evidence that a certain reverence for the forms of Christianity had been diffused through the nation, and that its conversion had speedily been followed by a revision of its old constitution, and the introduction of a stricter morality. Again, we possess stringent letters addressed by King Athalaric (who succeeded his father Theodoric on the throne of the Ostrogoths, A.D. 526) to Pope John II. on the subject of simony*, which we can scarcely believe to be the spontaneous productions of an imbecile sovereign, who was brought to his grave by continued excess at the age of sixteen; nor was it probable that a mere secular adviser would presume to interfere in matters of ecclesiastical discipline: we must rather look upon this as another proof of the early prevalence of the clerical element among the barbarian nations. But the relations of the priesthood to the civil government must be reserved for our future investigation: we are occupied at present in ascertaining their intimate connection with the Teutonic life, as we have done with the Roman life, of the period.

armis, firma pacis fœdere..... nuper ad Catholicam fidem conversa, immunis ab hæresi, dum adhuc teneretur barbarie, inspirante Deo inquirens scientiæ clavem" [ap. Canciani *Leg. Barb.* t. ii. pp. 9, 10].

* Canciani *Leges Barb.* t. i. p. 14.

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It must not be imagined that, because they stood, as we have represented, at the head of the ancient population, who constituted the mass of the inhabitants in the Western European lands, they were on that account possessed of an insignificant influence over the proprietors of the soil: on the contrary, they held over their new converts a moral sway far more cogent than even the partly political authority exercised by them over their fellow-citizens. Their rude lords could not look with indifference on the ministers of that religion which received them in its embrace at their entry into the world, and deposited their bodies in the grave at the close of their career; which exercised the most unflinching watchfulness over every action of this life, and claimed a yet more awful jurisdiction over the soul in the life to come. The sacred person of the servant of God, who dispensed the deep mysteries of the faith, and was protected by the safeguard of a venerable code hidden from barbarian knowledge, was looked upon with feelings of filial reverence, to which the sophisticated sons of civilization must ever be strangers. The hallowed precincts of the Christian Temple, and the yet more inviolable sanctity of the altar, honoured alone, as they imagined, by the incarnate presence of the Almighty, was surrounded in their eyes with a glory more brilliant than that which had once encircled the mystic sanctuary of Hertha, or had clothed the *Treninsule*, the Germanic Palladium of their idolatrous progenitors. Indeed the expressions of Tacitus*

* *De Germania*, c. 7.

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are enough to convince us that the religious tendencies of the Teutonic nations were such as to render them especially prone to exalt the priestly order and office above every rival power. His words are "Neque animadvertere neque vincire, ne verberare quidem, *nisi sacerdotibus* permissum; non quasi in pœnam nec ducis jussu, sed velut deo imperante, quem adesse bellantibus credunt." Nor were the clergy themselves slow in promoting a feeling, which, while it advanced the limits of their faith, afforded no small gratification to their secular ambition. They introduced the idea of necessary priestly intervention, not only in the more secret intercourse of man with his Maker and his conscience, but even in those temporal concerns which might have seemed to lie beyond their jurisdiction. Thus they availed themselves of that statute of Constantine concerning the manumission of slaves, to which we have already adverted, and we find in nearly every one of the barbarian codes a law requiring clerical interference in every such moral amelioration of the people. The Lombard monarch, Aistulph*, decrees that the priest should lead the slave round the altar, and, by absolving him from his earthly obligations, tread in the steps of Him who came to free the soul from a severer bondage, and, as if to prove that

* "Sacerdos, quem designaverit, circa altare eum absque cujuscunque contradictione absolvat, et liber permaneat, quia maxima merces nobis esse videtur, ut de servitio servi ad libertatem deducantur, eo quod Redemtor noster servus fieri dignatus est, ut nobis libertatem donaret." *Leges Langobardicæ*, lib. v. t. 7. [? *Aist. Leg.* c. 3. ap. Cancian. *Leg. Barb.* t. i. p. 145.]

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such a custom is not to be attributed to the accident of local position, a similar edict occurs in the code of the Visigoths*, the most geographically remote of all the Germanic tribes[1].

* *Leges Visigothorum*, lib. v. tit. vii. c. 2. [ap. Cancian. *Leg. Barb.* t. iv. p. 125.] [The words are "Si quis sane vult ex integro manumittere commune mancipium, presbyterum qui præsens est vel diaconum commonemus, ne hujusmodi libertatem se fieri præsentibus permittant, quia hæc manumissio stare non poterit. Si quis autem commune mancipium vult a jugo servitutis absolvere, prius cum consortibus suis dividat, et suæ vindicet potestati; aut certe, cum his qui ei consortes sunt, id fieri vel precio vel precibus elaboret: et si sic voluerit præsente presbytero vel diacono manumittat, et libertas data firmetur. Quod si aliquis coram sacerdote vel diacono commune mancipium ex integro manumiserit, proprietatis suæ partem de mancipio amittat, et mancipium ad integrum consors ille qui non manumisit obtineat. Nam si partem suam, quæ in eodem mancipio illi debetur, absolvere voluerit, prohiberi non poterit"]

[1] Ducange (s. v. *Manumissio*) cites many authorities. "Ex beneficio S. Crucis, per Johannem Episcopum et per Albertum S. Crucis casatum, factus est liber Lambertus teste hac sancta ecclesia." '*Vet. inscript. in Eccl. S. Crucis Aurelianensi.*' "Denique *semper fuit consuetudo*, ut quicunque voluerint sursum aut ante altare Redemptoris, aut ante corpus beati Martialis, servos suos libertati darent." '*Conc. Lemovic.* (anno 1031) Sep. 2;' and Ennodius, *Opusc.* 8; 'Gul. Malmesbur. *Gest. Reg. Angl.* i. p. 33;' *Formul. vett. Bignonii.* c. 8 [al. 'Marc. *Form. App.*' ap. Cancian. ii. 251]; 'Anastas. Bibliothecar. in S. Julio PP.;' and Marculf. *Formul* App. c. 8 (ap. Cancian. ii. 250): to which may be added "Manumissiones in ecclesia sunt celebrandæ:" *Capit.* [*Kar. et Ludov.*] v. 32. [ap. Baluz. *Cap. Reg. Franc.* i. 831]; Liutprandi *Leg. Langob.* ii. c. 3 (ap. Cancian. i. 103); *ibid.* iv. c. 5 (ap. Canc. i. 107); *Leg. Ripuar.* lviii. § 1. [ap. Cancian. ii. 311]; '*Form. Leg. Rom.* c. 12;' and 'Burchard, ii. 28.' An English allusion to manumission at

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Another yet more prominent instance of the intervention early claimed and exercised by the clergy is to be found in the right of ecclesiastical sanctuary, which the passage we have already cited from Augustine proves to have been practically acknowledged by barbarian superstition at its very earliest collision with the Roman Empire. The privileges of the clergy in this respect appear never to have attained under the rude chiefs of the 6th and 7th centuries that exorbitant height which has proved so pernicious in more refined nations; for they were universally resisted by the civil legislation*, or so far modified as to be no longer obnoxious to the claims of justice[1]. To the general reader in our days the phrase

the altar occurs in King Wihtræd's Laws (viii. ap Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 17).

* The Visigothic code ordained that a criminal under sentence of death should be given up, but the extreme penalty remitted (lib. v. tit. vi. 5, 16). The Anglo-Saxon laws allowed nine days of impunity; but the priest was usually compelled to surrender the suppliant on the payment of a certain fixed sum by his prosecutor or master. See *Leges Inæ Angliæ Regis*, c. 5 ["Si quis mortis sit reus, et ad Ecclesiam confugiat, habeat vitam suam, et compenset prout jus eum doceat"], with Wilkins's note ad loc. [*Leg. Anglo-Sax.* p. 15. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 46.]

[1] When Turketul, abbot of Croyland, was recovering for his monastery (anno 948) some of its lost rights, "antiquam loci impunitatem vel immunitatem nullo modo consensit acquirere, ne sceleratis et impiis refugium a publicis legibus videretur in aliquo præbere, et cum hujusmodi maleficis compelleretur vel in aliquo contra conscientiam suam cohabitare seu consentire" (*Hist. Ing.* ap. Gale, *Rer. Ang. Scr.* i. 40). The "antiqua loci impunitas" granted by King Witlaf in 833 seems to have been unlimited, extending to "quicunque in regno meo pro quocunque delicto

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"ecclesiastical sanctuary" is suggestive only of the abuse of a custom which in early times was an acknowledged remedy for a weakness of the social state of Europe. It recalls to his recollection that troubled age of perverted feudalism, when the most guilty as well as the most innocent of homicides could find an assured refuge within the capacious limits of a church or a monastery, and when a numerous clergy presented, in this respect at least, an incentive, because a security, to vice. We must more correctly judge of the institution by its legitimate action during the days when it supplied the often necessary protection against sudden vengeance or illegal assaults, which it was vain to expect from the careless execution of imperfect laws; and we may view it as the reaction against the flagrant injustice of the statutes which admitted a pecuniary composition in cases of wilful murder: when a purer code was introduced, it became unnatural and repugnant to the well-being of society.

Another marked peculiarity of the period, and one which seems to imply more than any other either the

reus inventus et legibus obnoxius fuerit" (*ibid.* p. 8). The privileges of sanctuary are much modified in Ethelred's Laws (c. vii. §§ 16—18 ap. Thorpe, p. 142). The canons (8 and 9) of the Council of Rheims [anno 625] (Frodoard, *Hist. Eccl. Rem.* lib. ii. c. 5. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 146. Couvenier, p. 188. Le Cointe, *Ann. Ecc. Franc.* ii. 752) simultaneously denounce excommunication on whosoever shall drag a fugitive from sanctuary without making oath not to kill, torture, or mutilate him, and require every criminal who obtains his life by the protection of the Church to make oath that he will do penance for his crime, and perform whatever shall be canonically imposed upon him.

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constant intervention of the clergy in the ordinary affairs of life, or the complete incorporation into the every-day life of the people of the doctrines they inculcated, is the frequency with which religious forms occur in all deeds and forms of ordinary processes. Numerous instances of this present themselves to us in one of the most curious compilations relating to the social condition of the barbarian nations, the Formulæ of the Monk Marculf, who seems to have published them towards the end of the 7th century. Even in such of these as relate to purely secular actions, the introduction of religious phraseology tells us how exclusively the intellectual world had fallen under clerical domination. Thus in the formula of servile manumission the following sentences* occur: "Qui debitum sibi nexum relaxat servitium, mercedem in futurum apud Dominum sibi retribuere confidat. Igitur ego in Dei nomine, &c.[1]" It may, indeed, with

* Marculfi *Formulæ* (ap. Baluz. *Capit. Reg. Fr.* [t. ii. coll. 423, 4]) lib. II. cc. 32, 34. See also, as illustrations of the same custom, some Anglo-Saxon charters of the 9th century, quoted by Palgrave, *English Commonwealth*, Part II. p. ccxx. &c.

[1] The following additional examples are taken from Ducange (iv. 253 *b*): "Quoniam omnis potestas a Deo est, et qui potestati resistit ordinationi Dei resistit, qui summa et mirabili dispensatione Reges et Duces cæterasque potestates in terra constituit, ut minor majori, ut consequens erat, serviret potestati; et inter eos quosdam dominos alios servos esse voluit, ita tantum ut et Deum domini et servi dominos venerarentur et amarent, juxta illud Apostoli, *Servi obedite dominis carnalibus cum timore et tremore;* et ad dominos; *Domini, quod justum est et æquum est servis præstate, minas remittite, quia et vos dominum habetis in cœlo:* si et vobis et illis dominatur, quicunque ipse, qui Rex et dominus

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justice be urged that the phrases we have quoted are often mere words, and no more argue a perpetual and active remembrance of the great truths they imply, than the form of words so common in deeds of a later age, "appropinquante mundi termino," gives reason to believe that the world was in readiness for the momentous change thus so frequently predicted and expected. But we must at the same time, in whatever light we look upon such phrases, whether as mere expressions of a constant clerical intervention, or with more reason as presenting the outward results of a newly acquired Christianity, respect the untutored faith of men who thus in all their civil actions held in view higher aims and motives than any which this world could present.

omnium est, forma et speculum totius boni, jugum servitutis pro nobis subire dignatus est, quatenus nos a Legis maledicto et servitute diabolica liberaret, et suæ ineffabilis libertatis participes efficeret.—Idcirco ego, pro redemptione animæ meæ et pro æternæ beatitudinis retributione, hunc servum mei juris et omnem fructum ejus ab omni servitutis ejus jugo absolvo, ut ab hodierna die et deinceps securus et suæ potestatis existat, eat quocunque voluerit, portas habens apertas, et nulli servitutis obsequium nisi soli Deo, pro cujus amore ipsum manumitto, debeat." ('ex *Tabul. S. Laudi Andegavensis.*') "Piissimus dominus noster Jesus Christus inter alia præcepta.....præcepit [fidelibus suis] debitores suos a debitis illorum absolvere &c.....Tantæ igitur auctoritatis præconio compulsi, dominæque Hugardis Comitissæ gratia precibusque animati, nos Canonici S. Laudi hunc fidelem nostrum Radulphum, Ecclesiæ nostræ vinculo servitutis obnoxium, ab omni debito servilis conditionis, pro animabus nostris Goffridique Comitis excellentissimi, qui potissimus Ecclesiæ nostræ fundator et ornator extitit, omniumque benefactorum nostrorum, absolvimus, &c."] (*ibid.*)

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We have said enough to prove the ever more and more intimate connection which united to the priestly order as well the ancient inhabitants of the provincial towns as the warlike lords of the soil[1]. And if it should be supposed that we have spent an unnecessarily long time on this branch of our subject, it must be answered, that by this very relation in which the clergy stood to the two originally hostile sections of the people did they work out the security and salvation of mediæval Europe. In spite of all reasonings founded on the evils of excessive priestly sway, it clearly appears that this the one inherent advantage of their position more than counterbalances them all. It has been truly remarked by a great historian of our own day*, that the peculiar characteristic and advantage of modern civilization lies in this, that it is not developed from a single origin, and does not, as its predecessors have done, tend to the realization of one leading idea alone: if then we admit this truth, and delight to discover among the Roman provincials, as well as among the Germanic nations, the foundation of the moral and political edifices in which we glory, we must at the same time admire and cherish the memory of that great third estate to whose action we owe our intellectual ancestry. Valuable as was the

[1] According to the 27th canon of the Council of Rheims (Frodoard, *Hist. Eccl. Rem.* lib. ii. c. 5. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 149, 150. Couvenier, p. 193), no bishop was to be appointed unless a native of the province and elected by the desire of the people and with the consent of the bishops of the province.

* Guizot, *Civilisation en Europe*, leç. ii. [t. ii. pp. 44—46].

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cultivation which lingered within the walls of Roman towns, it was, as the preceding centuries testify, if viewed in itself alone, poor, sapless, and void of all great promise. Healthy as was the new blood and independent the rude energy shed forth upon the world by the forests of Germany, it too was, in itself, destitute of any vital germ for the renovation of the exhausted world, for it was but the energy derived from successive ages of savage life. In a word, the European world was occupied by two distinct and conflicting, though not ignoble, elements. Their shock might to an observer of mere outward things have seemed unavoidable; and there could be little doubt concerning the victory in a struggle whose chief result would be to consign the conqueror to irremediable ruin. Then it was, during the most threatening crisis of the world's history, that a religion bearing yet, amid all the imperfections of its ministers, manifest traces of that Divine love from which it sprung, operated to combine the jarring elements, and restore comparative tranquillity to mankind. So glorious a result we must refer to the instrumentality of the clergy; and assign to them as their pre-eminent praise, that not only have they handed down to us the traditional wealth of literature and legislation, but have displayed a more truly civilizing power in gradually amalgamating what to us appears as one society.

There was one peculiarity of the clerical body in those early days, which at this distance of time we perhaps scarcely realize with sufficient accuracy, although

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it seems in no unimportant degree to have contributed to increase and enlarge the social power of the priesthood. I allude to the vast multitudes who were numbered within the more immediate pale of the Church, and enjoyed the privileges of its ministers*. It was the custom of every European country to admit to clerical immunities many ecclesiastics who had never received ordination, and were to be distinguished from the laity only by their tonsure. It cannot be denied that this practice was in after times carried out to the most pernicious extreme[1], and was indeed from the very first a wide deviation from the strict rules of Apostolic teaching; for it seems to have originated in the custom of conferring the tonsure upon children† as a pledge of future

* See Guizot, *Civilisation en France*, leç. 13. [t. ii. pp. 6—8].

[1] "Atque ita ordine perverso innumeri sunt inventi, qui se abbates pariter et præfectos sive ministros aut famulos regis appellant, qui, etsi aliquid vitæ monasterialis ediscere laici non experiendo sed audiendo potuerint, a persona tamen illa ac professione, quæ hanc docere debeat, sunt funditus exsortes; et quidem tales repente, ut nosti, tonsuram pro suo libitu accipiunt, suo examine de laicis non monachi sed abbates efficiuntur." Bede, *Ep. ad Ecgbert.* 13. Milo, whom Charles Martel intruded as bishop of Rheims instead of Rigobert, is spoken of as "sola tonsura clericus" (Frodoard, *Hist. Eccl. Rem.* lib. ii. cc. 12, 13. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 172—175. Couvenier, pp. 222, 225, 227).

† That the tonsure of children was an ordinary practice is proved by the frequent statutes of the French kings against their being thus cut off from the world without the consent of their parents. Guizot, in the passage above referred to, seems to consider that the ceremony, when performed on children, implied their devotion to a monastic life; but the wording and context of

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ordination, and to have been materially promoted by the numerous temptations which the social station of a Churchman offered to the ambitious and the oppressed; but its dangerous tendencies do not appear to have been

the edicts we speak of appears to connect the tonsure rather with the secular than the regular clergy. ["Erat in Ecclesia S. Martini Turon. triplex ordo Canonicorum. Primus Presbyterorum et Diaconorum qui in *stallis* superioribus sedebant. Secundus Subdiaconorum aliorumque minorum ordinum, quibus locus erat in inferioribus stallis. Tertius ordo erat Canonicorum puerorum seu Clericorum simplicis tonsuræ, qui in scamnis considebant puerorum choralium more, dividebanturque inter se variis stationibus et officiis. Hi nomine Clericorum seu Canonicorum *de Terra* designabantur. (Ducange, s. v. *Clerici*, ii. 392 *b*, *c*.) The nun of Heidenheim, who describes the travels of her relation St Willibald, tells us that, when in his third year he was dangerously ill, his parents brought him to the cross with vows "extemplo illum sub sacri ordinis primordio tonsuram accipere, sub cœnobialis vitæ disciplina, sub divinæ legis moderamine militando Christi famulatui subjicere," if he should recover. Accordingly, when he was five years old, and "jam tunc temporis germinabat sapientiæ virgultum," they "illustrem quantocius cum consultu amicorum carnaliumque propinquorum consilio ad sacræ cœnobialis vitæ instrumenta præparare atque perficere festinabant;" and sent him to the abbey of Waltham, where the abbot Egwalt referred the question of his admission to the monks: "cui protinus omnis illa conventio fratrum simul responsum seu licentiam dabant, suæque voluntatis arbitrio hæc omnia fas fore dicebant, acceptumque illum ocius inter cœnobiale vitæ eorum consortium jungendo sociabant (*Hodoeporicon S. Willibaldi*, cc. 1, 2. ap. Canis. *Lect. Ant.* ii. 107. ed. 1725). Among the *Excerptiones* (95 ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 334) of Ecgbert, archbishop of York, is the rule of Isidore, "Quicunque a parentibus propriis in monasterio fuerit delegatus, noverit se ibi perpetuo mansurum; nam Anna Samuel puerum natum et ablactatum Deo optulit; qui in ministerio templi permansit."]

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called into play until the old canons were neglected, which excluded the dregs of society from the service of the altar. Meanwhile it materially strengthened the authority of the Church by surrounding it with devoted adherents, easily to be distinguished from the long-haired barbarians, and forming, as it were, a middle order between the sanctity of the ordained priesthood and the main body of the faithful. The ties which bound together the Roman and Germanic peoples were thus more than ever strengthened, since a large increase was effected in the numbers of that sacerdotal order which was most interested in the consolidation of society. Before we turn to consider another mode of clerical influence, we must answer one objection which might very speciously be urged against the correctness of the preceding conclusions. It might be argued that the natural and inseparable union of the priesthood with the old population was in so marked a manner the principal feature in their organization, and so much more cogent than the somewhat feeble bond which attached them to the barbarians, that it may more reasonably be supposed to have tended rather towards alienating the minds of the conquerors, and that we must consider the social amalgamation to have proceeded rather in spite of than in consequence of clerical interference.

Now, as if for the express purpose of convincing us how completely and how willingly the clergy bound themselves occasionally by a community of interests with the

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conquerors, we possess records* which prove that it was by no means uncommon for dignitaries of the Church voluntarily to surrender the privileges of the Roman Law, and submit themselves to the barbarian codes.

Such, then, was the great moral and social work of the Christian ministers during the gradual settlement of the European nations, but it was by no means their only one. Well worthy of remark in a less degree was their influence as the disseminators of the old Roman traditions and legislation among the new possessors of the soil, and in cherishing a spirit which manifested itself in the zeal for the restoration of almost forgotten offices and insignia, as when Theodoric attempted to restore among the Ostrogoths the fallen dignity of the Empire, and the Frank conqueror of Gaul assumed to himself the titles of Patrician and Augustus†: but a fuller investigation of these topics will fall more appropriately under a future division of our subject.

Thus far we have limited our view more especially to the period of national migration and final settlement, which was the forerunner of the mediæval system. If we

* See the passages quoted by Savigny, *Gesch. d. Röm. Rechts.* vol. i. p. 117, note 66. ["'Fumagalli, *Cod. dipl. Ambros.* Num. 124. p. 502. *a.* 885.' 'Ego Leotpertus archipresbiter ecclesie S. Juliani qui professo sum legem vivere langubardorum.' Eben so der Bischoff Atto von Bergamo im J. 1072. Ughelli, [*Italia Sacra.*] t. iv. col. 447 [ed. 1719]. In Bergamo war es im zehnten und elften Jahrhundert so haüfig, dass man diese Ausnahme fast als Regel ansehen konnte. 'Lupi. p. 225.'"]

† Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, t. i. p. 227.

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now direct our attention to the moral condition of the European world during the age of comparative repose intervening between the re-establishment of more enduring governments and the accession of Charlemagne, we shall find satisfactory traces of the progressive operation of clerical authority; and our inquiries are materially facilitated by the circumstance that although the conditions of the different parts of Europe before the rise of the Carlovingian Empire varied widely, yet we may safely compare their relative progress by assuming them all to have diverged from one common center, to be found in those customs and modes of thought peculiar to all the Teutonic tribes. Let us take what is perhaps the most obvious and most frequently cited of all these barbarian characteristics. Nothing can be more completely indicative of an utterly uncultivated state than the penal code of the German nations; indeed we can scarcely term it a penal code, for in the ages of those primitive legislators crime, in the sense we attach to the word, had no existence. Every violation of what we denominate public justice was to them a mere civil offence; for national authority was never exerted in the punishment of guilt, and retribution depended solely on the power or inclinations of the injured party. This system of "*weregilt*" or penal composition was originally so inherent in all the barbarian tribes that we may assume their greater or less deviation from the ancient laws in this particular as a not inaccurate test of their progress in the humanizing arts. Now the Visigothic kingdom, as we have already seen,

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was the first to exhibit any approach towards a more correct penal legislation. In it first was the "weregilt" in any measure abolished, and truer ideas on the subject of crime inculcated on the people*. Their civil code, too, indicates a state of society far superior to that of the Burgundians or less polished Franks, and it contains, prefixed to its leading enactments, such general remarks on the principles of jurisprudence and the respective duties of a legislator and his subjects, as prove it to have been compiled by men of thought and philosophy. If we seek for the cause of so manifest a superiority, we shall find it in that extraordinary legislative and political authority of the clergy, which imparted to the great national councils of Toledo the mingled characters of Parliament and Convocation†, and which we shall more thoroughly examine when we have come to consider the political influence of the priesthood. And lest it should be imagined that the superiority of Visigothic jurisprudence was the consequence rather of a long course of unbroken tranquillity than of the maxims of Roman law transmitted through the clergy, we may enunciate this general proposition which appears to be supported by a comparison of the various European nations during the 6th and 7th centuries:—That, in proportion as each Germanic tribe, on establishing itself in its new dominions,

* See, *e. g.* lib. VI. tit. 5 [ap. Cancian. *Leg. Barb.* t. iv. pp. 137—142], where unintentional homicide is made expiable by a composition, but murder by capital punishment alone.

† See Gibbon, c. 38.

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found itself in contact with a more or less organized clergy and submitted with greater or less willingness to the exhortations of its spiritual advisers, so was the rapidity of its subsequent progress from the rude enactments of former days to the scrupulous justice of Rome. In illustration of this, we find that the Burgundians, who of all the invading hordes, if we except the Visigoths, occupied a land most thickly teeming with Roman cities and rejoicing in the most numerous and thoroughly organized priesthood, possessed a code far surpassing in completeness and impartiality the rude statutes of their Frank neighbours. While in our own island, where, as we have already noticed, the whole fabric of Roman hierarchy had been most utterly demolished by the savage idolatry of the Saxon conquerors, and where the scanty privileges of the clergy placed them in a less dominant position than was enjoyed by their brethren either in France or Spain, the ancient ignorance and barbarism on the subject of penal ordinances held sway long after it had vanished from the continent of Europe[1]. From such an induction as this we seem to be fully justified in asserting, that to the clergy principally does Europe owe the disappearance of that pernicious notion which taught man to look upon himself as answerable to his injured

[1] Thus the early part of Alfred's Laws, which consists of little more than adaptations of the Mosaic law, repeatedly ordains capital punishment (see in particular § 15. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 21); whereas in the later part (see § 9. Thorpe, pp. 30, 31, and §§ 27—31, pp. 35, 36) a pecuniary compensation is appointed for the same offences.

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fellow-creatures alone, and for the inculcation of that doctrine from which he learnt to anticipate in the awards of national justice the more severe retribution of the offended Deity. We shall be confirmed in this opinion if we examine that remarkable series of royal constitutions and national decrees, known as the Capitularies of the Frank kings. Such scanty edicts of the earlier Merovingian monarchs as have been preserved are filled with little else than bare repetitions of old barbarian laws from the East of the Rhine, with characteristic valuations of human life and limb, and are, on the whole, such as might reasonably be expected to emanate from an assembly of warriors. However, we learn from the contemporary chronicles that the first sovereigns of the Carlovingian race, animated by a far-sighted piety, entrusted to the clergy the supreme direction of the Champ de Mars assemblies: accordingly, the decrees headed by the names of Carloman and Pepin, while they profess to be produced by the joint wisdom of temporal and spiritual potentates, bear the scantiest marks of the former, while in every phrase they display the unceasing industry of the latter, and, instead of being framed after the model of the old unmeaning enactments, they tend to the establishment of a purer morality, and to the more complete organization of the Church and of the official responsibilities of its ministers*.

* See in particular the decrees of the Council of Vermeric (held by Pepin I. A.D. 752) ap. Baluz. [*Capit. Reg. Franc.*] t. I. coll. 161—6.

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During the preceding pages our undivided attention has been given to the *secular* clergy, as we may now in strictness term them; and we have left unexplored a wide field of research, from which we may discover the means employed and the results achieved by the not less zealous and enterprising members of the monastic orders. In a previous section we have watched the progress of monasticism from its origin in the Egyptian deserts to its less congenial abodes among the recesses of the Apennines; and, notwithstanding all the inherent errors of the ascetic practice, we were led to the conclusion that a large portion of the Christian truth and knowledge which survived in a degenerate age had retired from a world more than ever abhorrent to its principles. But the protection which contemplative minds had sought from surrounding worldliness was more than ever needed to secure them against the more fatal assault of advancing barbarism. It stood them, indeed, in better stead against the latter than against the former; for the protecting walls of the cloister, and the yet more effectual safeguard of the religious awe which they inspired, could avert the roving hordes of a temporal foe, while they proved powerless against the more pernicious advances of sloth, luxury, and pride,—enemies whose pertinacity and success became every day more terrible; for, wherever monachism had spread, the defects of the system began to flourish and multiply with portentous rapidity, and everything was to be feared from those institutions which but a century before had presented to the Fathers of the Church such

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noble prospects. Such was the emergency, when from the Sabine hills echoed through the length and breadth of Europe the voice of reformation. It is impossible for any student of mediæval history, however prejudiced, not to gaze with admiration on the commanding grandeur of the great Benedict. All who have studied his history must look with an equal astonishment on the energetic simplicity of his work, and the widely spread multiplicity of its results. For he found the monastic life slothful, he left it actively employed in promoting civilization and religion. He found it wasting its capabilities on irrational exercises, he left it intent on rational occupations. He found it undisciplined and consequently loaded with spiritual arrogance, he left it guided (as far as such a system could be so) by a definite rule, and striving after a Christian humility. And for such a work as this it may well seem no unworthy recompense that he stands at the head of so illustrious a spiritual progeny. For not many years after the first establishment of the monastery at Monte Cassino the Benedictine order could reckon among its ornaments one* who, whether we consider the zeal with which he defended the interests entrusted to him or his yet greater success in extending the empire of the true Faith, merits well the epithet of "Great" which posterity has bestowed upon him. But Gregory, illustrious though he be in himself, is yet more associated to an English reader with the spiritual triumphs of another Benedictine, Augustine, through whom the knowledge of

* See Mabillon, *Annales Ord. S. Ben.* t. I. p. 163.

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the Gospel was spread among our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. The good seed sown in Britain was destined to redound in no small measure to the honor of the brethren of St Benedict, and to add new ornaments to their already renowned order. The historian of their achievements relates* that throughout the whole Anglo-Saxon nation ecclesiastical interests were supported by the Benedictines alone, that, as they had undergone the toils of a missionary life in England, so now they reaped the merited reward of universal respect and spiritual power[1]. But the most splendid result of the establishment of the order in this island is to be found in the almost unparalleled achievements of a third Benedictine, Boniface. There is no more striking example of the earnest zeal and sincere desire for the advancement of the faith which characterized the monastic bodies during this their earlier and purer stage, than the history of the Apostle of Germany. It is indeed true that he was not more distinguished by missionary power and success than by a devoted attachment to the See of Rome, which has caused Protestant writers to represent him as actuated

* Mab. *Ann. Ord. S. Ben.* t. I. p. 336, where we read that the three archiepiscopal sees of Canterbury, York, and Rochester had been founded, and were occupied, by Benedictines.

[1] "How dare ye [priests] now despise all their ordinances [of the four Councils], while monks hold the ordinances of one man, the holy Benedict, and live according to his direction? And, if they anywhere violate it, they make amends afterwards, by their abbot's direction, with all humility." Ælfric's *Canon* 34. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 447.

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during a life of unceasing hardship, and supported in the prospect of a violent death, by no higher motive than a blind subjection to the commands of his ecclesiastical superior; but if we judge him either by the difficulties and dangers he overcame, or by the great results on Central Europe of the national conversions consequent on his preaching, we shall place his name among the most illustrious ones, not of the Benedictine order alone, but of the Church in all ages. Space would fail, if we were to attempt to enumerate even the most illustrious of the many great minds which have been sent forth from the cloisters of the Benedictines to enlarge the limits of Christianity and literature; but in moral greatness those we have mentioned surpass all others: to proceed further in the enumeration would be to display the decay of lofty virtue in the monasteries, by adding to their intellectual brilliancy.

The period, then, of the early Merovingian dynasty in France, and of the Visigothic power in Spain, is that during which the true advantages of the monastic principle made themselves most universally apparent. In every European country the cloisters presented the only refuge to the literature of preceding ages, and the only source whence could be expected again to flow the rich stream of ancient learning. We have already in part investigated the rise of the monastic spirit in the West, but we have not looked upon it as what it unquestionably was, a powerful civilizing and christianizing agent; for during the preceding centuries its work had

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been a purely passive one. We have seen that the monasteries of the East, in accordance with that gloomy spirit of meditative asceticism which founded and maintained them, devoted themselves entirely to spiritual occupations, and by so doing exposed their inmates to all the temptations which most irresistibly beset the inactive. The opposition which the transplanted system met with in the West testified how uncongenial such a life was to the practical spirit of Italy. And the popularity attained by the followers of Benedict shows how thoroughly that far-sighted reformer appreciated the national characteristics of his countrymen, as well as the requirements of a monastic life. He perceived that spiritual sloth and arrogance could be restrained only by an admixture of secular employments with the usual religious observances. Animated by this conviction, while he subjected the ceremonies and spiritual duties of his monks to the strictest regulations, by establishing within the monastic bounds schools and nurseries for those arts and sciences which were fast disappearing from among men he not only recommended to his countrymen institutions which combined religion with such manifest practical advantages, but conferred upon that shapeless society which was to receive the truth through the instrumentality of his disciples the manifold blessings of material civilization. Agriculture, for example, which, as we have already remarked, had fallen away throughout the Empire owing to the annihilation of the labouring rural population, and which could scarcely be looked for

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in any perfection among the wandering tribes of Central Europe, was fostered only within the protecting walls of Benedictine monasteries. While the fertile plains of Lombardy or Campania had long been reduced to unheeded desolation by social insecurity and imperfections, there might be descried among the ridges of the Apennines valleys yet rejoicing in all their ancient fertility, where the sacred influences of the monasteries sheltered the scanty remnants of an ancient population and of an almost universally forgotten agriculture; while the monks, fearful of suffering from the consequences of a forced spirituality, employed themselves in practising those arts and handicrafts which foreign invasion had driven away from the towns[1]. When the activity of the Benedictine fathers was displayed in disseminating Christianity through the dark places of Europe, that close combination of worldly and religious occupations which characterized the rule of their founder proved a principal means of imparting to the new converts all the blessings of an ancient cultivation. The agricultural colonies and workshops which we have seen rising in Italy were transferred unchanged to the recesses of Gaul or Germany, and the fields encircling the monastery still continued to bear abundant produce, while the monkish "Scriptoria"[2]

[1] See the account of Eastorwine in Bede, *Hist. Abb. Wiremuth.* 8.

[2] Ducange (s. v. vi. 131 *c.*) quotes Alcuin [*Opp.* ii. 211. ed. Froben.]:

"Hic sedeant sacræ scribentes famina legis,
Necnon sanctorum dicta sacrata Patrum;

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within were stored with the treasures of an already obsolete literature[1].

In a word, while we must look upon the secular

Hic interserere caveant sua frivola verbis,
Frivola nec propter erret et ipsa manus.
Correctosque sibi quærant studiose libellos,
Tramite quo recto penna volantis eat.
Est opus egregium sacrorum scribere libros
Nec mercede sua scriptor et ipse caret."

[1] "Scriptores præterea dicti in monasteriis, qui in scriptorio..... librorum scriptioni operam dabant. Monachorum enim alii, cum eorum nemo esset qui non re aliqua occuparetur, manuum operibus, officinarum monasticarum alii muniis, alii denique librorum scriptioni vacabant, certo numero ad id delecti ab Abbate, tum ut libros Ecclesiasticos, quo eorum esset semper copia, tum alios, qui ad literarum humaniorum et ecclesiasticarum studia necessarii essent, describerent. Quin etiam ea monachorum operibus manuum accensebatur.

Vide 'Ethelwulfum *De Abbatibus Lindisfarnensibus*, c. 8.'

'Comptis qui potuit notis ornare libellos.'

* * * *

'Greg. Turon. in *Vita S. Aridii*, p. 200.'

'Nunquam otio indulsit, quo non aut lectionem, aut opus Christi perficeret, aut certe manibus aliquid ageret, aut denique sacros codices scriberet.'

'*Lib. Ordinis S. Victoris Parisiensis MS.* c. 19.'

'Quicunque de Fratribus intra Claustrum scriptores sunt, quibus officium scribendi ab Abbate injunctum est, omnibus iis Armarius providere debet, quid scribant, et quæ ad scribendum necessaria sunt præbere, nec quisquam eorum aliud scribere, quam ille præceperit.'

* * * *

Sulpitius in *Vit. S. Martini*, c. 7.

'Ars ibi [in Cœnobio scilicet S. Martini] exceptis scriptoribus nulla habebatur, cui tamen operi *minor ætas* deputabatur.'" (Ducange s. v. *Scriptores*, vi. 131 *a*, *b*.)

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clergy as more especially useful in introducing civilized principles of action into barbarian society and legislation[1],

[1] Some instances of the care taken to maintain education and learning among the seculars may be seen in Ducange (s. v. *Clerici*, ii. 393 *b*, *c*). "'Leo IV. P.P. *De Cura Pastorali.*' 'Omnis Presbyter habeat Clericum Scholarem, qui epistolam vel lectionem legat, et ad missam respondeat, cum quo et psalmos cantet.'

'*Ordo Romanus*' habet hoc loco, 'Clericum aut Scholarem.'

'Hincmarus Remensis in *Capitulis de Rebus Magistri*, &c. c. 11.' 'Si habeat Clericum, qui possit tenere Scholam, aut legere Epistolam, aut canere valeat.'

'*Capitula Walterii Episcopi Aurel.* c. 6.' 'Ut unusquisque Presbyter suum habeat Clericum, quem religiose educare procuret; et si possibilitas illi est, scholam in Ecclesia sua habere non negligat, &c.'

* * * *

Clerici dicti etiam qui literis imbuti erant, viri literati ac docti, quod Clericos potissimum literatura ac eruditio spectaret.

Quippe ad Clericatum non promovebantur nisi γραμμάτων ἐπιστήμονες, ut est in '*Novell. Justin.* 6. cap. 4. et *Novell.* 123. cap. 12.' 'Qui enim literas nescit, Clericus esse non potest.'

* * * *

Et ut ait '*Speculum Saxonicum*, Lib. i. art. 5, § 4.' 'Impossibile est aliquem Clericum nominare, nisi sit doctus, ordinatus, et tonsuratus.'

Ordericus Vitalis, Lib. 3. [ap. Du Chesne, *Hist. Norm. Scr.* p. 464 D.] 'Clericus cognominatus est, quia peritia literarum aliarumque artium apprime imbutus est.'"

So the *Excerptiones Ecgberti* (*Can.* clix. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 341): "Omnes clerici, qui ad operandum sunt validi, et artificiola et litteras discant;" and the *Canons enacted under King Edgar* (11, 12, 34. ap. Thorpe, pp. 396, 398): "And we enjoin that every priest, in addition to lore, diligently learn a handicraft: And we enjoin that no learned priest put to shame the halflearned, but improve him, if he know better:...And we enjoin that every priest diligently provide so that he have good and especially orthodox books;" and Ælfric's *Pastoral Epistle* (46. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, pp. 461, 462).

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we must assign to their regular brethren the praise of having preserved for reproduction in more favored days all those arts and embellishments of the material or intellectual world which had been most valued by preceding generations. But above all we must ever peculiarly associate with the monasteries, as their greatest boon to succeeding ages, their maintenance of education. Each religious foundation, as we discern more clearly in the Carlovingian age, fulfilled the functions of a school for the clergy; and the most renowned among them were to the knowledge of their day what our universities are to

"Be careful also now, I pray, that ye be better and wiser in your ghostly craft for Christ's ministries, so as is rightly befitting you that ye should be, than the secular men are in their worldly crafts. Long should he learn who has to teach; and if he will not learn to be a teacher of right wisdom, he shall afterwards be a teacher of great error, &c. Blind is the guide who has to teach God's fold, if he neither have learning nor be willing to learn, but misleads himself and his parishioners along with him."

Manual labour is likewise enjoined in the Anglo-Saxon *Ecclesiastical Institutes* (iii. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, pp. 470, 471). "At the hours when ye leave off the reading of holy books and prayers, then shall ye undertake some useful secular work; because idleness is the soul's foe, and because the devil quickly brings into some vices him whom he finds devoid of any good work. By the custom of reading holy books, ye may learn both how yourselves shall come to heaven's kingdom, and also how ye shall teach others. By prayers also ye may be a great help both to yourselves and also to other men, who are associated with you in true love, both living and departed. By handywork ye may control your bodies, that they be the slower to vices, and also ye may provide so by that work, that with your goods ye may help poor men, who have not themselves, and have not the power to work."

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us. In later times a striving after an ideal perfection, followed, as it almost invariably is, by corruption, rendered the monastic houses the bane as they had once been the blessing of civilization; fruitless imitation of bygone customs prolonged their existence into an uncongenial age; but, long after all their other great qualities had perished, this one, their educational power, alone remained, and flourished among the followers of Benedict with unexampled vigor. Many errors and many abuses may be pardoned to an institution which has given to the world a Mabillon and a Montfaucon.

But great as undoubtedly were the humanizing powers of the Benedictine and other orders in the seats of more ancient civilization, it is on the outskirts of the Christian fold that we must look for their purest and most brilliant triumphs. Important as the labors of the monastic bodies in France, Italy, and Spain, must appear to us, yet a still larger share of our admiration is demanded by the efforts of those unwearied pioneers of the faith who in the northern lands of Europe founded and raised to so surpassing an elevation the great fabric of the Christian Commonwealth.

If we desire to obtain an instance of the origin and advance of Christian principles and practice, fostered by the zeal of monastic missionaries, nowhere shall we find a more striking one than in our own island. Cherished by the piety of Christian princes, the clerical body had attained during the British period a condition of intellectual brilliancy, as well as of political and numerical

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strength, to which the Church records of the age present few parallels. The names of Gildas[1], Iltutus[2], and Columbanus, even reaching us as they do through the mists of fabulous centuries, shed an intellectual radiance over the early inhabitants of the island; and the extraordinary opulence of such monasteries* as that of Bangor on the Dee, said to include within its capacious walls upwards of two thousand monks[3], may add some credit to the semi-fabulous accounts of Lucius and Ambrosius Aurelius, the Christian monarchs of pristine Britain. But the inherent weaknesses of a Roman province had extended their fatal influence over the Church as well as the State, and the constant Saxon inroads drove to the

[1] "Transfretavit mare Gallicum, in civitatibus Galliæ remansit studens optime spatio septem annorum, et in termino septimi anni cum magna mole diversorum voluminum remeavit ad Majorem Britanniam. Audita fama famosissimi advenæ, confluxerunt ad eum scholares plurimi undique, audierunt ab eo septem disciplinarum scientiam subtilissime, unde ex discipulis magistri effecti sunt sub magistrali honore." *Vita S. Gildæ*, 2. ed. Stevenson.

[2] Stevenson, following Ussher (*Ant. Eccl. Brit.* c. xiv. *Works*, t. vi. pp. 49, 66. ed. Elrington), mentions that he was generally known as "egregius Britannorum magister," and identifies him with the preceptor of Maglocunus, "pene totius Britanniæ magistrum elegantem," mentioned by Gildas (*Epist.* 36).

* See Ussher, *Ant. Eccl. Brit.* c. vi. p. 132 [ed. Dublin. 1639; *Works*, t. v. pp. 160—162].

[3] "...monasterio Bancor, in quo tantus fertur fuisse numerus monachorum, ut, cum in septem portiones esset cum præpositis sibi rectoribus monasterium divisum, nulla harum portio minus quam trecentos homines haberet, qui omnes de labore manuum suarum vivere solebant." Bede, *H. E.* ii. 2.

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shelter of the monastic walls multitudes utterly unfit for the performance of the sacred functions, while the sloth, ignorance, and luxury, which had infected the British clergy*, and rendered them so blind not only to the spiritual interests of their Master but to their own temporal advantage as to turn away their thoughts from the

* See the *Querela* of Gildas Badonicus, quoted by Ussher [ibid. pp. 67—75, 100] and Bede, *Eccl. Hist.* ii. 2, where he relates the ineffectual efforts of Augustine to unite the Celtic clergy with himself in the work of converting the Saxons. [The following are some of the charges brought against the clergy by Gildas (*Epist.* 66): "Sacerdotes habet Britannia, sed insipientes; quam plurimos ministros, sed impudentes; clericos, sed raptores subdolos; pastores, ut dicuntur, sed occisioni animarum lupos paratos, quippe non commoda plebi providentes, sed proprii plenitudinem ventris quærentes; ecclesiæ domus habentes, sed turpis lucri gratia eas adeuntes; populos docentes, sed præbendo pessima exempla, vitia, malosque mores; raro sacrificantes, et nunquam puro corde inter altaria stantes; plebem ob peccata non corripientes, nimirum eadem agentes; præcepta Christi spernentes, et suas libidines votis omnibus implere curantes; sedem Petri Apostoli immundis pedibus usurpantes, sed merito cupiditatis in Judæ traditoris pestilentem cathedram decidentes; veritatem pro inimico odientes, et mendaciis acsi carissimis fratribus faventes; justos inopes immanes quasi angues torvis vultibus conspicantes, et sceleratos divites absque ullo verecundiæ respectu sicut cœlestes angelos venerantes; egenis eleemosynam esse dandam summis e labiis prædicantes, sed ipsi vel obolum non dantes; nefanda populi scelera tacentes, et suas injurias quasi Christo irrogatas amplificantes;.....ecclesiasticos post hæc gradus propensius quam regna cœlorum ambientes, et tyrannico ritu acceptos defendentes, nec tamen legitimis moribus illustrantes; ad præcepta sanctorum.....oscitantes ac stupidos, et ad ludicra et ineptas secularium hominum fabulas, acsi iter vitæ mortisque pandant, strenuos et intentos." The forty-four following sections are to the same effect.]

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conversion of their conquerors[1], recoiled on their own heads in the utter desolation, as well of Church as of State, which followed the first establishment of the Saxons. For those barbarians made war equally on the British nation and on the faith it acknowledged; not a vestige was left of all the old ceremonial pomp: and the descendants of those enthusiastic multitudes who had crowded round the holy Germanus and Lupus, the champions of the orthodox faith, and had applauded their final subversion of Pelagianism[2], were either completely exterminated, or reduced to a hopeless serfdom[3]. Such was the lamentable state of a land whose Christianity was referred to apostles and companions of our Lord, when the close of the sixth century witnessed the arrival at Canterbury of the Benedictine Augustine and his colleagues. The extraordinary success which attended those dauntless missionaries is well known[4], but what is almost more remarkable still than the rapid resuscitation of Christianity among those who had so lately subverted it, was the vigor with which the monastic system, so long reduced to inanition by the baneful influences of prosperity, sprung once more into renewed existence[5].

[1] See also Bede (*H. E.* i. 22) for the conduct of the British Church to the Saxons before the arrival of Augustine.

[2] Bede, *H. E.* i. 17—21.

[3] Bede writes thus in A.D. 731 (*H. E.* v. 23): "Brittones..... quamvis ex parte sui sicut juris, nonnulla tamen ex parte Anglorum sunt servitio mancipati."

[4] Bede, *H. E.* i. 23—ii. 3.

[5] See Bede, *H. E.* i. 33; iii. 3, 4, 19, 23, 24; iv. 3, 6, 13, 19, 23.

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The intellectual history of the seventh and eighth centuries presents us with two striking instances of the goodness of the seed sown, and the fruitfulness of the harvest reaped, by the intellectual efforts of Anglo-Saxon Benedictines.

The first of these is to be found in the latter part of the 7th century, when, to use the words of the venerable Bede*, "the religious habit was held in great veneration, so that, wherever any clergyman or monk happened to come, he was joyfully received by all persons as God's servant, and if they chanced to meet him upon the way they ran to him, and bowing were glad to be signed with his hand or blessed with his mouth."

Learning, more especially the study of Greek, had been raised to an unwonted pitch of prosperity by the exertions of the monk Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his coadjutor Hadrian[1], while the arts and sciences, driven from the continent by barbarian turmoil, seem to have taken refuge in our more favored land[2]. Let us, then, at this period, direct our glance to

* *Hist. Eccl.* lib. iii. c. 26.

[1] See Bede, *H. E.* iv. 1, 2; v. 20. *Vita Abbat. Wiremuth.* 3.

[2] "Et quia literis sacris simul et secularibus, ut diximus, abundanter ambo erant instructi, congregata discipulorum caterva, scientiæ salutaris quotidie flumina irrigandis eorum cordibus emanabant; ita ut etiam metricæ artis astronomiæ et arithmeticæ ecclesiasticæ disciplinam inter sacrorum apicum volumina suis auditoribus contraderent. Indicio est quod usque hodie supersunt de eorum discipulis, qui Latinam Græcamque linguam æque ut propriam in qua nati sunt norunt." Bede, *H. E.* iv. 2. On the

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the northern extremity of England, where in the year of grace 674 a wealthy thane* of the name of Biscop obtained from the piety of king Egfred a piece of land at the mouth of the Wear, for the purpose of there founding a monastery, which was subsequently called after him Bishop Wearmouth[1]. The founder was a man of learning and religious feeling, and we might have given the cloisters of St Peter and St Paul credit for more than an ordinary share of scholastic erudition[2], even did they not boast the education of one whose very name is a reputation in itself; for *Bede* entered their walls in 680 at the age of seven years[3], and after spending there more than half a century in the almost unbroken retirement of study died among his disciples in 735[4].

Greek learning of Albinus abbot of Canterbury and Tobias bishop of Rochester in particular, see Bede, *H. E.* v. 20, 23.

* His pious zeal had induced him to adopt the monastic habit at the monastery of Lerins in France, and his name must ever be remembered as one of the principal patrons of learning and art among the Anglo-Saxons.

[1] See Bede, *H. E.* iv. 18. *Vita Abbat. Wiremuth.* 1—14.

[2] See Stevenson's Introduction to Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, § 7.

[3] "Qui natus in territorio ejusdem monasterii, cum essem annorum septem, cura propinquorum datus sum educandus reverentissimo abbati Benedicto ac deinde Ceolfrido; cunctumque ex eo tempus vitæ in ejusdem monasterii habitatione peragens omnem meditandis scripturis operam dedi: atque inter observantiam disciplinæ regularis et quotidianam cantandi in ecclesia curam semper aut discere aut docere aut scribere dulce habui." *H. E.* v. 24, § 454.

[4] See the striking letter of Cuthbert to Cuthwin in Stevenson's Introduction to the *Hist. Eccl.*, §§ 16—22.

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We have had preserved to us from his pen a full description of the course of education and study in that learned Benedictine society. Amid the delights of learning, teaching, and writing, the care of Church music was not forgotten, and from the list he has handed down to us of his works, during a lifetime of the severest mental labor, we may reasonably conclude that the condition of the Wearmouth Scriptorium[1] would scarcely have realized those extravagant tales of monkish ignorance which an age proud of its intellectual progress takes so much pleasure in repeating*. But while we admire the mental activity of the most learned of the Anglo-Saxons, whose attention, in an age when the old sources of information were after all but very partially opened, was directed to

[1] Benedict Biscop, in returning from his fourth journey to Rome, brought back to Wearmouth "libros omnis divinæ eruditionis non paucos vel placito pretio emtos vel amicorum dono largitos. Rediens autem ubi Viennam pervenit, emticios ibi quos apud amicos commendaverat recepit" (Bede, *Vita Abbat. Wiremuth.* 4): on his fifth journey "innumerabilium librorum omnis generis copiam apportavit" (*ibid.* 6): he returned from his sixth enriched "magna copia voluminum sacrorum" (*ibid.* 9): and during his last illness "bibliothecam, quam de Roma nobilissimam copiosissimamque advexerat, ad instructionem ecclesiæ necessariam, sollicite servari integram nec per incuriam fœdari aut passim dissipari præcepit" (*ibid.* 11). His successor Ceolfrid "bibliothecam utriusque monasterii" [Wearmouth and Yarrow], "quam Benedictus abbas magna cœpit instantia, ipse non minori geminavit industria: ita ut tres pandectes novæ translationis ad unum vetustæ translationis, quem de Roma attulerat, ipse super adjungeret" (*ibid.* 15).

* See the Epilogue to his *Eccl. Hist.* [v. 24. §§ 453—456] and Alcuin, *Ep.* 13 [ed. Froben. Ratisbon. 1777].

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every one of the studies which were accessible to his contemporaries, we must not suppose him to have stood forward as a solitary marvel of learning in the midst of a dark clergy and nation. On the contrary, we have evidence from his voluminous writings, that he, as all great literary men have done, formed the centre of a circle distinguished by every branch of science and erudition. The names of Egbert of York and Cuthbert of Canterbury stand distinguished among many other worthy disciples of so great a master*.

The second era of monastic history in England at which we shall glance is the latter half of the eighth century, where, in a Benedictine monastery at York, we obtain an insight into the education and intellectual progress of the Saxon *Alcuin*, the brightest ornament of literature and science since the fall of the Roman Empire. York during that century contained the most renowned schools in England or, we may perhaps say, in Europe, unless we ought to ascribe to national prejudice a letter of Alcuin's to Charlemagne†, in which he advises him to send over French youths to England in order to receive that perfection of science which their own country was

* See Wright's *Anglo-Saxon Literary Biography*, pp. 289—308, [and Stevenson's Introduction to the *Hist. Eccl.*, § 14.]

† Alcuin, *Ep.* 38. [? "Sed ex parte desunt mihi servulo vestro exquisitiores eruditionis scholasticæ *libelli*, quos habui in patria per bonam et devotissimam Magistri mei industriam, vel etiam mei ipsius qualemcunque sudorem. Ideo hæc vestræ Excellentiæ dico, * * ut aliquos ex pueris nostris remittam, qui excipiant inde nobis necessaria quæque, et revehant in Franciam flores Britanniæ."]

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unable to bestow upon them. If we were to give full credence to the exaggerated poetical strains * of its most illustrious pupils, the great Benedictine house at York was a plentiful source of every science and every art, from grammar to natural history, from astronomy to theology. The literary character, however, of Alcuin himself supplies us with a more satisfactory testimony to the merits of the school which produced him. The comparative polish of his style shows him to be one on whom the study of the great Augustan models had not been lost; and those who have perused his ponderous controversial tomes have found tokens of thought and correct philosophy which would have done honor to a more congenial age. That the pursuit of the severe sciences at York was somewhat more than a mere poetical embellishment, we may gather from those† of his letters in which he explains to his imperial pupil the mysteries of the Calendar, and some intricate problems in astronomy. We might add to those two illustrious names that of Aldhelm of Wessex, the pupil of Hadrian‡, and contemplate the benefits he conferred on his country's literature and theology by his writings, as well as by the flourishing monastery at Malmesbury, of which he was the first Abbot; but the examples we have already given

* [Alcuin,] *De Pontificibus et Sanctis Ecclesiæ Eboracensis*, 1433 [ap. Gale, *XV Script.* t. i. p. 728].

† *Epp.* 65—71.

‡ See Wright's *Anglo-Saxon Literary Biography*, p. 209. [Bede, *H. E.* v. 18.]

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are enough to lay clearly before us the condition of the monastic system during its most prosperous period in England, and to guide us in our estimate of the real benefits which accrued to the literature and philosophy of the seventh and eighth centuries from the Benedictine establishments of that island.

But what we have said does not apply to England alone, for we have abundant evidence that the pre-eminence of the regular over the secular clergy in all the principal functions of their station was common to all the European lands: indeed we could with difficulty point to a single name distinguished either in speculative or practical religion, the glory of which does not primarily belong to one of the great monastic houses. We can distinctly discern that, during this period of vagueness and perpetual change, the relations of the two great divisions of the priestly body to one another had undergone a complete alteration. The old mutual jealousy, which excited the spleen of the monks against the secular assumptions and political influence of the Bishops, and roused the ambition of the Bishops against the wealth, learning, and sanctity of the monks, had been forgotten for the time in a harmonious union[1], from

[1] Bede (*Vita S. Cudbercti.* 16) thus describes the constitution of the monastery of Lindisfarne: "Neque aliquis miretur, quod in eadem insula Lindisfarnea, cum permodica sit, et supra episcopi et nunc abbatis ac monachorum esse locum dixerimus; revera enim ita est. Namque una eademque servorum Dei habitatio utrosque simul tenet, imo omnes monachos tenet. Aidan quippe, qui primus ejusdem loci episcopus fuit, monachus erat et monachicam cum

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which the regular clergy (as they now became) gained all that the most aspiring could have looked forward to in theological and political distinction, while their secular brethren received the support,—which at no time did their disorganized state more greatly need,—of a body of learned, zealous, and practical coadjutors, who set themselves at once and earnestly to work in re-establishing the failing authority of the clergy over the nations of Europe[1]. Thus it was that in the beginning

suis omnibus vitam semper agere solebat. Unde ab illo omnes loci ipsius antistites usque hodie sic episcopale exercent officium, ut, regente monasterium abbate quem ipsi cum consilio Fratrum elegerint, omnes presbyteri, diaconi, cantores, lectores, cæterique gradus ecclesiastici monachicam per omnia cum ipso episcopo regulam servent. Quam vivendi normam multum se diligere probavit beatus papa Gregorius, cum, sciscitante per litterulas Augustino, quem primum genti Anglorum episcopum miserat, qualiter episcopi cum suis clericis conversari debeant, respondit inter alia, 'Sed quia tua fraternitas monasterii regulis erudita seorsum fieri non debet a clericis suis, in ecclesia Anglorum, quæ auctore Deo nuper adhuc ad fidem producta est, hanc debes conversationem instituere, quæ initio nascentis ecclesiæ fuit patribus nostris, in quibus nullus eorum ex his quæ possidebant aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed erant illis omnia communia.'" See also his *Epist. ad Ecgbert*, § 6.

[1] Examples of this union occur in the *Excerptiones* of Ecgbert, archbishop of York (Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 331): "Abbates pro humilitatis religione in episcoporum potestate consistant, et si quid extra regulam fecerint ab episcopis corrigantur; qui semel in anno, in loco ubi episcopus elegerit, accepta vocatione conveniant. * * Ipsi autem [monachi], qui fuerint pervagati, cum auxilio episcopi tanquam fugaces sub custodia revocentur." *Can. LXIII. Aurelian.* "Si extiterit abbas divinis jussionibus prævaricator regulæque sanctæ contemptor, ab episcopo civitatis cum consensu abbatum aliorumque monachorum timentium Deum honore abbatis privetur. Convenit enim episcopum civitatis, ut sancta et magna

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of the eighth century the monastic orders, whom the fifth century had seen yet excluded from ordination and appertaining rather to the laity than to the clergy[1], found themselves in possession of all the great episcopal seats, and the supreme ecclesiastical authority throughout the civilized world. If we, on the other hand, cast our eye down the page of history to the age of Dunstan and his followers in England, we shall be made aware how dark is the reverse of so fair a picture.

But we have already devoted too much space to the internal influence of the clergy, and the benefits which may indisputably be referred to their action on the masses of an undeveloped society. It is fitting that we now direct our attention to the effects of priestly interference with the political institutions and authorities of the same period.

So mighty was the power of the mere name of Rome on the rude tribes instrumental in its fall, that every paltry chief, whom the chances of Western conquest exalted into an independent sovereign, comes before us assuming, along with a fraction of the Roman territory, some travestied resemblance of Imperial dignity and

sinodus Calcedonensis decrevit, competentem monasteriorum providentiam gerere." *Can. LXV.* '*Episcoporum*' (cod. *Apostolorum*).

[1] In Augustine's time the distinction between monks and clergy was so strong, that he could say (*Ep.* 60), "Et ipsis enim facilis lapsus et ordini clericorum fit indignissima injuria, si desertores monasteriorum ad militiam clericatus eligantur, cum ex his qui in monasterio permanent non tamen nisi probatiores atque meliores in clerum assumere soleamus"; and more in the same strain.

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titles[1]. Now we have already seen that, previous to the re-establishment of extended political power, the clergy, insulated from all secular connexion with Rome, became an integral and in most cases a leading part of the municipalities to which they happened to belong; for the innumerable members of the European hierarchy, although they might maintain an uncertain communication with the power ecclesiastical in Italy, were assuredly bound to them by no common political tie. The barbarian monarchs, on the other hand, were not slow to discover that of all the engines of government possessed by the Emperors whom they mimicked there was not one capable of exerting so profound an influence, for good or for evil, as the Christian clergy. Accordingly, we soon discover that in exact proportion to the strength of Imperial traditions, and the care displayed in preserving Imperial forms, was the authority claimed at first by the secular over the spiritual functionaries. Even the Bishops of Rome, before whose frown remote ecclesiastical dignitaries already trembled as they acknowledged their spiritual supremacy over the flock of Christ, were compelled to submit to the commands, imperious in fact, though often couched in the most submissive terms, imposed on them by the Teutonic conquerors of Italy. The letter, for example, of the Ostrogoth Athalaric to Pope John II., (to which we have already alluded*,)

[1] See, for instance, the description of Theodoric II. by Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* i. 2).

* At the same time, although this is the usual tone assumed

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against simony in episcopal elections, assumes a tone of command very different from the filial respect with which the contemporary monarchs of France or Spain would have addressed their less aspiring prelates. In a word, during these the primitive ages of barbaric royalty, when the influence of the clergy over the sovereign was that of mind over brute force, priestly power was necessarily most important where the intellectual gloom was thickest; and however much weight we may attach to the common-places which assert the demoralizing and enervating effect of excessive clerical domination, we must confess that it is to the influence of sacerdotal advisers that must be referred whatever progress towards a more perfect political system contemporary history and legislation reveal to us during the period we are considering[1]. The clergy, possessing as they did a practical knowledge of the old Roman Law, were alone found capable of adapting to the countless requirements of a land old in civilization the clumsy barbaric codes of the interior of Germany.

towards the Holy See by the Romanized barbarians, the exact relations of spiritual and secular power, previously to the age of Hildebrand, seem to have depended rather on the character of individual popes and monarchs than on any fixed ideas of supremacy entertained by one or the other of the two powers.

[1] Clovis gave St Remigius as much land as he could compass while the king was saying his mid-day prayer, 'yielding in this matter to the prayer of the queen and the desire of the inhabitants, who complained of being overburdened with exactions and contributions,' (Frodoard. *Hist. Eccl. Rem.* i. 14, ap. Guizot. *Coll. des Mém.* v. 51, Couvenier, p. 69);—the Church, as usually in the middle ages, being the better landlord.

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We have already observed the evident marks of clerical hands in the prefaces to the revised editions of the ancient Frankish Laws, and the earliest capitularies of the Merovingian monarchs betray the same powerful influence. The first constitution* of a Frank sovereign which has come down to us is an exhortation to the final extirpation of lingering idolatrous customs from the land; and the most cursory perusal of the edicts promulgated by the immediate successors of Clovis will convince us how large a share of the legislative energies of the State was occupied in providing for the discipline and pecuniary interests of the Church;—a fact which can scarcely be attributed to any other cause than the overwhelming weight of priestly advisers with the sovereign and the nation. Again, if any deductions may be drawn from verbal niceties among a barbarous people, we find that in the treaty of Andelot, between Guntramn king of Burgundy and Childebert II. (A.D. 587)†, not only are religious phrases and ecclesiastical stipulations introduced in an abundance which betrays the hand of a clerical secretary, but in the mention of the royal advisers the sacerdotal functionaries take precedence of the secular ones. Indeed it hardly needed such evidence as this to persuade us that an enlightened and acute priesthood among a politically ignorant nation must soon attain a power not confined to spiritual things alone[1].

* *Const. Childeberti de abolendis Reliquiis Idololatriæ*, A.D. 554. (ap. Baluz. *Cap. Reg. Fr.* [t. i. coll. 5—8.])

† Baluz. *Capit. Reg. Franc.* t. i. coll. 1—16.

[1] The dispute between Clothaire and his son Dagobert as to the

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But in order to examine to the greatest advantage the complicated workings of the clerical body on the Teutonic states as they increased in civilization and became associated with the remnants of Roman dominion, we may investigate somewhat more minutely the process as exemplified in one nation, and that the most politically enlightened of the barbarian tribes, the Visigoths. The "*Forum Judicum*," (subsequently known as the *Breviarium Alaricianum*), or collection of the statutes published by the Spanish monarchs till the Saracen conquest, presents to us a far more lively view of the amalgamation of Roman and Germanic polity, than we can obtain from any other quarter; clerical influence accordingly is throughout more prominently displayed than in any other legal compilation of the period. And, from the peculiar

division of the kingdom was adjusted "electis ab his duobus regibus duodecim Francorum proceribus, ut eorum disceptatione hæc finiretur intentio; inter quos et domnus Arnulfus pontifex Mettensis cum reliquis episcopis eligitur, qui benignissime, ut sua erat sanctitas, inter patrem et filium pro pacis loquebatur concordia" (Fredegarii *Chronicon*, c. 53). "Cum pontifices et universi proceres regni sui * * pro utilitate regia et salute patriæ conjunxissent," &c. (c. 55). Similar instances of bishops acting habitually as the king's counsellors, and co-operating with the "proceres" and "cæteri leudes" in important state affairs, especially in reference to the succession, occur repeatedly in the same chronicle (cc. 41, 44, 56, 58, 75, 76, 89). So Pepin of Landen, mayor of the palace, took as his habitual adviser Arnulf bishop of Metz (who before becoming bishop had been himself mayor of the palace), and after his death Chunibert bishop of Cologne (*Vita Pipini Ducis*, ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* iii. 380, 381; Du Chesne, *Hist. Fr. Scr.* i. 594 B, C.).

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circumstances of the Spanish Church and monarchy, we may justly consider that we have in it such a picture of clerical intervention in the affairs of Government as we could find in no other contemporary nation.

Spain, under the later Roman Emperors, had enjoyed a degree of prosperity surpassing that of any other province. Her rich municipalities gloried in the political and literary distinctions of her sons, for there were few European lands which could boast such names as Trajan, Hadrian, and Theodosius; and we may be assured that on the dislocation of the Empire the towns of Iberia and Bætica did not sink to the degraded level of the other divisions of the civilized world. Hence it naturally followed that, when the Visigothic chiefs established their sway, they found themselves in contact with numerous Roman citizens, headed and guided by a powerful body of clergy.

Sidonius Apollinaris has drawn the following picture, couched in language which in its day must have passed for epigrammatic elegance, of King Euric, the founder of the Visigothic constitution, which does not lead us to conclude that the priesthood found much favor with that rough and energetic sovereign*:—"In concilio jubet; in consilio tacet; in ecclesia jocatur; in convivio prædicat; in cubiculo damnat; in quæstione dormitat. Implet quotidie altaria reis, carceres clericis; exultans Gothis, insultansque Romanis, illudensque præfectis, colludensque numerariis; leges Theodosianas calcans, Theodorici-

* *Ep.* ii. 1.

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anasque proponens." However, if the Teutonic princes of Spain set themselves in array against the clergy, they must soon have found themselves overmatched, for in the seventh century they scantily shared with the Church that supreme power which they had been unable to wrest from it. And the contrast between the military and political weakness of Spain and its eminence among the other Germanic nations in every branch of civilization is a sufficient token of the decay into which the Goths had fallen, and of the simultaneous activity of the intellectual principle as represented by the clergy. Indeed, throughout, the Visigothic constitution was a strange medley of the autocratic and the so-called theocratic elements. The great national councils which assembled at Toledo applied themselves, as soon as they had been inaugurated with all the pomp of a religious ceremony, to the ecclesiastical affairs of the realm, and seemed to look upon the civil legislation as merely a secondary share of the great religious work committed to their hands. The predominance of the ecclesiastical element, as well as the changeless stability of the national character, is attested by the stringency of the statutes against Jews and Heretics, foreshadowing the horrors of the Inquisition. But our opinion concerning the fruit borne by clerical power must be formed not so much from such edicts as these as from the accidental allusions occurring throughout the code: in which we may clearly discern the moral integrity and elevation which we have already traced,

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as diffused by the action of the clergy throughout the asperities of Roman legislation.

We took notice, in the preceding section, of the gradual sway acquired by the priestly authorities over the Roman officers, and of the check thus exercised on magisterial corruption or irregularity. What during the Roman age had been a tacit exercise of salutary authority, became now a recognized portion of the state government. If, for example*, on a pauper appearing before a civil tribunal, the magistrate neglected his suit, or wilfully perverted justice, the Bishop of the diocese was empowered to supersede him for the time, and, in case the Count of the district refused to carry into execution the episcopal decision, he was liable to be mulcted in a specified sum. And, in general†, the magistrate who despised the just counsels of the bishop and his assessors was liable to be deposed through the influence of the latter from the exercise of his functions for the time being. These enactments, which at first sight may appear to confer an exorbitant power on the prelates, will be placed in a truer light, if we interpret them into means of securing the equal rights of the Roman population, and of protecting the ancient inhabitants, by the intervention of their kindred churchmen, from the injustice of their Gothic conquerors. Such a province,

* *Leg. Visig.* lib. II. t. i. c. 29. [ap. Cancian. *Leg. Barb.* t. iv. pp. 73, 74.]

† Ibid. t. i. c. 30 [ibid. p. 74].

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we may rest assured, fell to the lot of the bishops in every continental country to a greater or less degree, and one of their most beneficial modes of action was that by which they afforded security against barbarian violence to the privileges of the municipalities. But we obtain yet further proof of the judicial authority which superior legal knowledge and acuteness bestowed on the Spanish bishops, in a statute associating them with the "judices" in ascertaining the fidelity of slaves, witnesses of a will*.

It appears, then, that not only have we considerable evidence to show that the Visigothic code was in great measure compiled by clerical jurists, but that we may believe the aid of Christian prelates to have been frequently invoked in order to secure against barbaric turbulence the equitable administration of the laws they had framed.

In Spain, as throughout Europe in general, the clerical and monarchical powers seemed to depend in their relations to each other upon the administrative talents or incapacity of the sovereign; and the excessive despotic sway exercised by the active and unscrupulous among the Visigothic kings gives us to know how more than elsewhere necessary for the well-being of the nation was the imposing bulwark which the Church presented to the autocratic tendencies of the Court.

The methods of beneficial clerical action which have fallen under our notice in Spain might for the most part,

* Ibid. t. v. c. 13 [ibid. p. 85].

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with the exception of the last we have touched upon, which was rendered peculiarly necessary by the servile spirit of the nation in those days, have been discerned, though with far less distinctness, in the other Teutonic tribes; for example, in France under the Merovingian dynasty the political power of the clergy was less steadily exerted in opposition to royal prerogative, though, when the latter attained a threatening pre-eminence in the state, we invariably find the clergy ranged with the asserters of national liberties[1]. Indeed it is evident that, before the Church was finally consolidated into one unanimous body, pervading all countries, and acting in obedience to a single absolute Head, and before the system of Church supremacy over kings, which to us is associated with the name of Gregory VII., was perfected by the craft of an ambitious priesthood, the most natural position for the clergy was that of antagonism to all despotic tendencies; for, so long as monarchs were free to deliberate on the subject of clerical power in the state, and to check ecclesiastical excesses without fear of the Vatican, they presented a far more serious obstacle to the advancement of the Church than was to be dreaded from the most capricious of popular movements. Accordingly we shall be justified in assigning to priestly influence no small share of the benefits accruing from the

[1] See, for instance, St Leodgar's opposition to Childeric's revocation of the national laws which he had been induced to restore (*Vita S. Leodgari*, c. 4, ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém* ii. 332. Du Chesne, *Hist. Fr. Scr.* i. 603 A).

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restrained authority of the sovereigns during the early mediæval period[1].

But to take a yet more interesting example of the beneficial political action of the clergy, we discover, on turning to our own island, that the political position of the Anglo-Saxon clergy, while as yet the various national Churches had not been united under the See of Rome, differed in more than one respect from that of their

[1] The following extracts from Ethelred's Laws illustrate the Anglo-Saxon feeling: "But there are some men who, on account of their pride and also on account of birth, scorn to obey divine superiors as they ought to do if they desired right; and often apply themselves to blame what they ought to praise, and account the worse for their humble birth those whose forefathers were not in the world either wealthy or proud, through worldly splendour nor in this transient space of life flourishing or powerful; but these are neither wise nor wholly discreet, who will not obey God, nor better understand how often He has from little raised to great those who obeyed Him and justly spake. We know that through God's grace a thrall has become a thane, and a 'ceorl' has become an 'eorl,' a singer a priest, and a scribe a bishop. And formerly, so as God decreed, a shepherd became a king, and he was very great: also, so as God decreed, a fisher became a bishop, and he was very dear and acceptable to Christ. Such are the gifts of God, who can easily from little raise to great all that He Himself will, so as the Psalmist truly said when he thus sang: *Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster &c.? suscitans a terra inopem, et de stercore erigens pauperem, ut collocet eum cum principibus, cum principibus populi sui:* he understands those that have fear of God and heed wisdom. * * We have all one heavenly Father, and one spiritual Mother, which is called *Ecclesia*, that is, God's Church; and therefore are we brothers. And then it is also just that each of us observe justice towards another" (Ethelred's Laws, vii. 21—23, 30, 31. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, pp. 142—144).

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continental brethren, and that the influence they exerted on the state of people was, as might indeed have been expected from the general constitution of the Anglo-Saxon states, a more healthy and beneficial one.

In the first place they appear to have possessed this one great moral advantage over the clergy of every other European power, that the position which they occupied in society was a more moderate and definite, and consequently a more universally influential one. They neither swayed the whole councils of the nation, as did the haughty churchmen of Spain, nor were they, like those of France, merely occasional members of the great popular convocations. The composition of the Champ de Mars assemblies at a subsequent period under Charlemagne supplies us with sufficient proof that the nation of the Franks were never accustomed to look upon the clergy as a governing body in the state, while in England they formed as necessary a part of the Witenagemote as the thanes or the knights[1]. By this means they were

[1] "In the Anglo-Saxon period the priest seems to have attended with the townsmen [and the Gerefa at the judicial assemblies of the Hundred and the Shire], but after the Conquest the clergy withdrew from the courts of purely secular authority" (Palgrave's *Engl. Comm.* vol. i. p. 83). In the two general Shire Courts to be held throughout England every year, "the Bishop and the Ealdorman were to preside, and respectively to declare the ecclesiastical and municipal law" (p. 117). So in Sweden, "those suits, which could not be decided within the limits of the Hærred, were reserved for the high remedial and inquisitorial court of the Reefsting, which was constituted in the following manner: The 'Laghman,' or Lawman, was Speaker or President; the Bishop, two Priests from the

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preserved from claiming such an authority as to weaken their moral weight with the people, and possessed at the same time sufficient political influence to enable them to devote to the public weal the intellectual superiority of their class; at the same time, while their political influence was thus strengthened by salutary checks, they enjoyed advantages of social position unknown to the continental clergy, for we read repeatedly of prelates connected by ties of blood with the royal families of the Saxon provinces*; whence we may conclude that in

Episcopal Chapter, and two of the King's Council, were associated to him; and, if the latter were absent, two good and freeborn men were elected, to supply their places, by the Lawmen and the Clergy" (p. 113). In Iceland too, "when the Laugrett [or supreme judicial and legislative assembly] was assembled on the Hill of Pleas, it consisted of 12 times 12 or 144 members, virtually representing the people; to whom were added the Bishops and the Laghmen of the island. In this Court the 'men of Iceland were to reform their laws, if they would'" (pp. 115, 116). Instances of judicial or quasi-judicial functions appointed for the English bishops and clergy may be found in Alfred's Laws, second set, § 1 (Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 27); Edward and Guthrum's Laws, §§ 10, 12. p. 74; Æthelstan's Laws, c. i. *Preface*, p. 83; Cnut's Laws, § 18. p. 165. The bishops frequently appear associated with the kings in the Anglo-Saxon laws; as in Alfred's Laws, second set, § 41 (ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 39); Ine's Laws, *Pref.* p. 45; § 45. p. 56; Edward and Guthrum's Laws, § 12. p. 74; Laws on Ranks, § 8. p. 82; Æthelstan's Laws, c. i. *Pref.* p. 83; Edmund's Laws, *Prefaces* to both the ecclesiastical and the secular laws, pp. 104, 105; Edgar's Laws, c. ii. §§ 3, 5. p. 113; *Suppl.* § 1. p. 115; Ethelred's Laws, c. vii. §§ 2, 5, 6. p. 141; and the *Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical*, § 5. p. 424.

* See Kemble's *Saxons in England*, vol. ii p. 373.

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general the Church stood in a closer connexion than it did elsewhere to the nobility of the land[1]. This peculiarity as well as the preceding one may be explained by that one original distinction between England and the countries of the Continent which lies at the root of so much that is peculiar in the old Anglo-Saxon institutions, that the nation was not, as those of France or Spain were, composed of a small mixture of patrician Teutonic blood with the mass of the Celtic or, as we may term them, Roman inhabitants. The Saxons invaded England as a nation, not merely as an army, and the population was not only subdued but, to speak generally, exterminated before the conquerors. Hence the bond, political as well as social, which united the clergy to every rank of the people; hence the influence they obtained, as

[1] In Norway, when the throne became vacant by forfeiture or incapacity, "according to the law of Haco, the foster-son of Athelstane, the Archbishop and Bishops and 12 of our best men in each diocese decreed the Crown to such of the brothers of the deposed Monarch as was deemed most worthy. The Laymen were sworn, and made the election upon their oath; but the Prelates gave their votes upon their conscience and honour. If the royal family became extinct in the direct line, the Bishops and Abbots, the royal Thanes, and all the royal Feudatories, assembled at the shrine of King Olave, in order to take counsel with the Archbishop concerning the succession to the throne, the Bishops were each accompanied by 12 men, as before, and these juries were to present upon their oath the name of the nearest heir to the deceased Monarch, &c. Unanimity was not required, and the verdict was given by the plurality of voices, provided the Clergy were on the side of the majority" (Palgrave's *Engl. Comm.* vol. i. p. 132).

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well in the public councils of the nation as in their private intercourse with the very lowest orders of society[1]. By none, not even by the most scrupulous of the Teutonic nobility, could they be looked upon as a foreign body, enjoying the sole right of ruling in matters ecclesiastical, but to be jealously excluded from matters political.

Nor, on the other hand, was there any danger of their occupying that position which appears to have been so fatal to the whole Visigothic state, of chiefs and political protectors of a powerful and oppressed population, —a position to whose temptations must in all probability be referred the exorbitant political interference of the Spanish priesthood.

Again, the salutary political power of the English churchmen was called into play more than elsewhere in consequence of the variety of conflicting states and interests which nourished the spirit of faction throughout the island, and the fury of intestine strife was not a little relieved by the mediation of men whose holy office obtained equal reverence from every one of the contending

[1] The care for the poor and for captives shewn in ordinances of purely ecclesiastical origin, in the case of penances imposed on offenders &c., may be seen in Theodore's *Liber Pœnitentialis*, c. xxiii. §§ 3, 4 (ap. Thorpe, p. 290); c. xli. § 5, p. 300; *Fragm.* (from the *Pœnitentiale Romanum*, vii. 30), p. 316; *Excerpt. Ecgberti* 56 (*'Can. Aurelian.'*), p. 330; 83. (*'Can. Arausican.'*) p. 333; Ecgbert's *Pœnitentiale. Additam.* § 7. p. 390 ("Qui congesserit immodicas divitias, tertiam partem pro stultitia sua pauperibus tribuat") ; and the *Canons enacted under King Edgar.* *'Of Penitents,'* §§ 14, 15. pp. 412, 413.

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parties. Thus, we read in the Church History of Bede* that, on a second ground of quarrel arising between Egfrid king of Northumbria and Ethelred king of Mercia, whose spirit of rivalry had not been quenched by a previous sanguinary engagement, Theodore Archbishop of Canterbury, "relying on the Divine assistance, by his wholesome admonitions extinguished the dangerous fire that was breaking out, so that, the kings and the people on both sides being appeased, no man was put to death." Thus, during the early days of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons, before a servile adherence to Rome had perverted the purity of their motives, the clergy, though in a situation of less apparent splendour than was enjoyed by those of other countries†, possessed an influence for good which gave them no real reason to envy others who with more seeming privileges wielded a less true power[1].

* Book iv. c. 21.

† See Kemble, *not. ad loc. cit.* [ii. 373].

[1] The kind of duty, which bishops and priests were believed to owe to society, may be understood from the Anglo-Saxon *Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical* [cc. vi—x, xix. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, pp. 427—429, 432—434]. "And they [bishops] shall learn and rightly teach and diligently inquire regarding the people's deeds; and they shall preach and earnestly give example, for the spiritual need of a Christian nation: and they shall not willingly consent to any unrighteousness, but earnestly support all righteousness; they shall have the fear of God in mind, and not be too slothful for fear of the world: but let them ever earnestly preach God's righteousness, and forbid unrighteousness, observe it who will; because weak will the shepherd be found for the flock, who will not defend, at least with his cry, the flock which he has to

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In describing the political benefits of the clergy during our present period, we are compelled throughout

tend, unless he otherwise may, if any public robber there begin to rob." "To a bishop belongs every direction, both in divine and worldly things. He shall, in the first place, inform men in orders, so that each of them may know what properly it behoves him to do, and also what they have to enjoin to secular men. He shall ever be [busied] about reconciliation and peace as he best may. He shall zealously appease strifes and effect peace, with those temporal judges who love right. He shall in accusations direct the 'lád' [i. e. exculpation], so that no man may wrong another, either in oath or in ordeal. He shall not consent to any injustice, or wrong measure, or false weight: but it is fitting that every legal right (both 'burh-riht' and 'land-riht') go by his counsel and with his witness; and let every burg measure and every balance for weighing be by his direction and furthering very exact; lest any man should wrong another, and thereby altogether too greatly sin. He shall always shield Christian men against every of those things which are sinful; and therefore he shall apply himself the more vigorously to everything, that he may the more readily know how the flock fares which he has to tend from God's hand. * * It behoves all Christian men to love righteousness and shun unrighteousness; and especially men in orders should ever exalt righteousness and suppress unrighteousness; therefore should bishops, with temporal judges, direct judgments, so that they never permit, if it be in their power, that any injustice spring up there. And on priests also it is incumbent, in their shrift-districts, that they diligently support every right, and never permit, if they can ameliorate it, that any Christian man too greatly injure another; nor the powerful the weak, nor the higher the lower, nor the shireman those under him, nor the 'hlaford' [i. e. master] his men, not even his thralls. By the confessor's direction and by his own measure, it is justly fitting that the thralls work for their 'hlafords' over all the district in which he shrives. And it is right that there be not any measuring rod longer than another, but all regulated by the confessor's measure; and let every measure in his shrift-

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to the melancholy reflection that, in this respect more perhaps than in any other, it was an age of approaching

district and every weight be by his direction very rightly regulated; and, if there be any dispute, let the bishop arbitrate. It is every 'hlaford's' own advantage to protect his thralls as he best may, because they and those that are free are equally dear to God, and He bought us all with equal value. We are all God's own thralls, and so He will judge us as we here judge those over whom we have judgment on earth: it therefore behoves us to protect those who are to obey us; then may we look for the greater protection at God's own judgment." "A bishop's daily work. That is rightly, his prayers first and then his bookwork, reading or writing, teaching or learning, and his church hours at the right time, always according to the things thereto befitting; and washing the feet of the poor; and his alms-dealing; and the direction of works, where it may be needful. Good handicrafts are also befitting him, that crafts may be cultivated in his family, at least that no one too idle may dwell there. And it also well befits him, that at the 'gemót' he oft and frequently promulgate divine lore among the people with whom he then is." "It is incumbent on bishops that venerable 'witan' [i. e. councillors] always travel with them and dwell with them, at least of the priesthood: that they may consult with them before God and before the world, and who may be their counsellors at every time, betide whatever betide them. It is incumbent on bishops that there be always good instruction in their families, &c. It is incumbent on bishops not to be too prone to jesting, nor to care too much for hounds and hawks, nor worldly pomp, nor vain pride. It is incumbent on bishops not to be too eager for money at ordination, nor at consecration, nor at penance, nor in any wise to get wealth unjustly. It is incumbent on bishops never to lay a curse upon any man, unless they are compelled by necessity. * * It is incumbent on bishops patiently to endure what they themselves cannot amend, until it shall have been announced to the king; and let him then get amends for the offence against God, where the bishop cannot; if he will rightly execute God's will, and righteously exalt his own kingship." "Nor may he [the

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downfall, and that, although Europe has to refer many blessings to the enlightenment of her clergy, they were but as the foundation of a noble edifice, whose progress was checked by advancing corruptions. We shall find that, during our last chronological section, the political benefits we have to enumerate will be few and insignificant compared with those which have presented themselves to our notice in this section.

priest] flinch either before the lowly or the powerful, because he doeth naught, if he fear or be ashamed to speak righteousness. Ill will he fare if through his lack of energy the flock perish, which he has to keep, and himself along with it. * * Such [as the priests denounced by the prophet] are those who will not, or cannot, or dare not, warn the people against sins, and correct sins, but desire nevertheless their monies for tithes and for all church dues, and neither lead them well by examples, nor instruct them well with preachings, nor well heal them with penances, nor intercede for them with prayer, but seize from men's gettings whatever they can grasp, just as greedy ravens do from the corpse, wherever they can light upon it. It is all the worse when they have it all, for they do not dispose of it as they ought, but decorate their wives with what they should the altars, and turn everything to their own worldly pomp or to vain pride, that they should do for the honor of God, in ecclesiastical things, or for the advantage of poor men, or in the buying of war captives, or in some things that might be for lasting benefit both to themselves and also to those who give them their substance for the favour of God."

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[CHAPTER V.]

We are now to enter on the last chronological section of our subject, extending from the accession of Charlemagne to the Imperial throne to the rise of the Capetian dynasty in France, and the first development, on the banks of the Tiber, of more exalted ideas concerning papal and clerical jurisdiction. During this entire period the tendency of clerical power, both politically and socially, was an apparently onward one, though we may reasonably doubt whether at its close the priesthood exercised either over the minds of individuals or the policy of the nations as truly and honorably influential a sway as what we have traced during the preceding centuries.

At the fall of the Merovingian dynasty, the condition of the ecclesiastical world bore a considerable resemblance in its leading features to that of the Roman Empire three centuries previously. For the clergy, instead of opposing to the caprices of surrounding barbarism that strict unity which had so long and so actively promoted the cause of truth, suffered themselves to be led astray by the attractions of party intrigue and promised political power, so as to look upon themselves as members rather of distinct and conflicting earthly kingdoms than of the Church universal. The unbending morality, by which more than by any other means they had established and maintained their influence over the conquerors of

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Europe, had given way before the solicitations of temporal prosperity; so that the whole Church, had it not possessed within itself a sure principle of stability, would have fallen, as Rome did, rather by the weakness of its defenders than by the strength of its adversaries. And in proportion to the unsophisticated barbarism of the Christian nations was the rapidity with which the perversion of the Church reacted on the framework of society; for it was hardly to be expected that the rude minds of Franks or Goths should be able to account for the lamentable variance between the precepts and examples of their spiritual guides, or should bestow any great attention on the exhortations of such prelates as Leodegarius, Bishop of Autun*, who devoted all their powers to political intrigue, and did not scruple to assemble and conduct fratricidal armies[1].

From this its state of greatest depression the Church began to recover at the establishment of the Carlovingian dynasty in France: for the monarchs of that house were the first to display a true appreciation of their country's necessities, by introducing a thorough clerical reform. Contemporary with these events in France was the extension, under the preaching of Boniface, of Gospel

* See Sismondi, *Hist. des Fr.* t. ii. p. 65. [Also the *Vita S. Leodgari*, ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* ii. 319—371. Du Chesne, *Hist. Franc. Script.* i. 600—616.]

[1] "Virilitatem cœlestis civis senescens mundus gravatus viciis non valuit sustinere," says his anonymous biographer (*Vita S. Leodgari*, c. 4, ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* ii. 333. Du Chesne, *Hist. Fr. Scr.* i. 603 A).

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knowledge to the east of the Rhine, and the final separation of the Roman and Greek Churches, in consequence of which the rising papal power, supported by all the vigor of the Carlovingian sway, was directed more exclusively to Western Europe; and was enabled to lay in the ecclesiastical body the secure foundations of that despotism so soon to be experienced by the temporal as well as the spiritual authorities. Such then was the general condition of the religious world at the moment when the Frank empire was again united under a victorious and dreaded chief; and it is during this the second and more systematic establishment of Church power among the barbarians (as we fear the paladins of Charlemagne must in historical correctness be styled) that we have to investigate the moral benefits of clerical influence. In order the more fully to appreciate the workings of clerical intercourse during this the eventful age, in which we first discern so many of those institutions peculiar to modern civilization, we must first glance at the social and political development of the European nations during the palmy days of the Carlovingian Empire; and during the century of incipient feudalism consequent on its dismemberment.

Nearly every historian or essayist has rejoiced in some infallible key to the great problem presented by the internal condition of Europe during the Carlovingian age; but an unbiassed reader, as contending hypotheses pass before his eyes, may reasonably question the universal applicability of any, and may the more firmly be induced

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to believe that during the eighth and ninth centuries the only permanency was the prevailing barbarism. But the sudden and gigantic extension of Frankish sway under Charlemagne produced an entire convulsion in society as well as in politics; while at the same time it must be observed that many of the changes usually associated with the name of that great conqueror are rather to be considered as mere developments of the policy of his predecessors than as innovations of his own, just as historical strictness awards to his father and grandfather those triumphs over the infidel which have been bestowed by romance upon the court of Aix-la-Chapelle. In like manner that gradual and constant transition from the system of political centralization to that of distribution, which is usually assigned to Charlemagne, ought rather to be considered a tendency of the social movement during the eighth and succeeding century; and in France this was combined with the amalgamation of the Frank and Romano-Gallic nations, or, as it might perhaps more correctly be termed, the absorption of the former into the latter. The first of the two great changes to which we have alluded is that by which the numerous functions originating in the turmoil of barbarian administration, the offices of dukes and counts, throughout France and Italy became hereditary instead of elective[1]. By this means, although for centuries the

[1] A year after Dagobert's death Pepin was succeeded by his son Grimoald as mayor of the palace (Fredeg. *Chron.* c. 85),—the first instance of hereditary transmission of an office of the sort. Again,

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assemblies of the Champ de Mars continued to exercise a nominal authority, and the royal power alternately rose and sunk, yet the country ceased to be, as it had been, under the immediate superintendence of the chief of the French nation; and we perceive for the first time through France, Germany, and Italy, the elements of those regal duchies, counties, and bishoprics, productive of so weighty a result during the middle ages. If we compare this state of the European social system with that of the Church, we shall find in it an apt illustration of a rule which seems to apply to the relations of ecclesiastical to civil power: that the phenomena in the changes of the one are in an inverse ratio, as it were, to those of the other; for the authority of the Church, weakened under the concentrated sway of Charlemagne, rose into fuller activity in proportion as the Empire was rent in pieces from the grasp of his descendants.

Now although this social movement, limiting the real though not the nominal power of the sovereign, and improving the condition of the lower orders by multiplying the centres of production and expenditure, certainly did not take its rise with Charlemagne, yet it does appear to have acquired additional importance during his reign, both from the new freedom of action it obtained, and from the vast extent of Europe over which the political and social ideas of France were diffused. For not

on Grimoald's death the office fell, seemingly for the first time, into the hands of a minor ("parvulus"), his son Theodoald (2nd Cont. of Fredeg. *Chron.* 104).

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only were institutions from the banks of the Seine transported to those of the Elbe and the Tiber, but the extreme distance from the wealthiest provinces of the Empire to the seat of administration weakened the Imperial authority in those very districts which were most able and willing for the approaching duties of self-government.

The other peculiarity of the period, the gradual recovery of power by the Roman element throughout the continent, will be presented to us with greater clearness when we come to view the political influence of the clergy.

It appears then, on the whole, that, though we have adopted as our chronological limit the accession of Charlemagne to the throne of Clovis, we have so done more from regard to the strongly marked character of his administration, as laying before us in a striking light the peculiarities of the age, than because we considered his reign as the real commencement of a new era in European society. Another and more powerful reason is to be found in the circumstance that under his sway first[1] were the principles of incipient feudalism in France disseminated through other lands; and from the close of the eighth to that of the tenth century, the general organization of the various Christian communities on the continent may be so far considered identical, as that

[1] Yet Pepin, after quelling a revolt of Theodebald, son of Godfrey duke of Suevia, returns "revocato sibi ejusdem loci ducatu" (3rd cont. of Fredegarii *Chron.* c. 113).

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we may suppose them to possess the same leading characteristics.

But to return to our more immediate subject. The accession of Charlemagne found the priesthood in possession of an increased and rapidly increasing moral power over the people, consequent on a reform within the Church itself. The impulse from without, by which such a change was effected, has already been exemplified by the Capitularies of Vermeric: and the very large proportion of the contemporary enactments devoted to the enforcement of the Canon Law testifies to its previous neglect. Regarding the succeeding century, we can desire no more secure or complete source of information than the very miscellaneous collection of state papers known as Baluze's edition of the *Capitularies of the French Kings*. Although the ecclesiastical form imparted to the legislative body of the Franks under Pepin was very far from being continued after the Champ de Mars once again became what it had anciently been, the mustering ground of the national army, and though even under the unwarlike sceptre of Louis le Debonnaire the people never submitted to be represented, though they might allow themselves to be ruled, by the clergy, yet, as we glance over the statutes bearing the names of Charlemagne and his successor, the number of them devoted to the enunciation and enforcement of the Canon Law strikes us as a very remarkable peculiarity of the period. M. Guizot has presented to his readers* an elaborate

* Guizot, *Civilisation en France*, leç. 21. t. ii. [pp. 324—338.]

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table of the Capitularies of Charlemagne and his successors, from which it appears that those which he classes under the three heads of moral, religious, and canonical edicts, all of which we may suppose to have been drawn up under the immediate eye of the clerical advisers of the emperor, comprise, during the reign of Charlemagne, considerably more than a third part of the general legislation; under his son, again, the proportion of those above specified to the whole number is smaller, yet still so considerable as to attract notice, especially when we remember that a very important power of independent ecclesiastical legislation was lodged in the hands of the prelates[1], and that all such statutes are to be looked upon as mere appendices to the enormous mass of canonical edicts which had preceded them. Under Charlemagne, however, the fact we have mentioned is especially worthy of note, when we reflect that many of the national assemblies were summoned in remote half-subdued districts, and were in their very essence military encampments, where the presence of the clergy was forbidden not only by more ancient statutes but by a

[1] "Concilia quoque jussu ejus super statu Ecclesiarum corrigendo per totam Galliam ab episcopis celebrata sunt, quorum unum Mogontiaci, alterum Remis, tertium Turonis, quartum Cabillione, quintum Arelati congregatum est, et constitutionum quæ in singulis factæ sunt collatio coram imperatore in illo conventu [apud Aquasgrani] habita; quas qui nosse voluerit, in supradictis quinque civitatibus invenire poterit, quamquam et in archivo palatii exemplaria illarum habeantur" (Einhardi *Annales*. sub anno 813. ap. Pertz. i. 200).

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recent Imperial injunction*, granted in consequence of a popular petition remonstrating against the warlike propensities of the Christian pastors. Here then we possess a remarkable token of the intellectual and moral energy pervading the clerical body, and of the earnest vigor with which the disciplinarian reforms, begun during the reign of Pepin, were carried on during those of his son and grandson, both among the clergy themselves and among their barbarian flocks.

In our preceding section we have mentioned that it was mainly owing to clerical influence that the old system of composition for crimes was infringed upon, and we discover yet more evident traces of the same circumstance during the centuries we are now examining. It was indeed as yet far from being the case that crime was universally punished in those days on the same principles which regulate our modern penal codes; but we cannot but see, along with that increase of clerical authority to which we have already referred, the continued progress and application of those principles. Indeed it is, to speak generally, difficult to overestimate the advantages which have accrued to modern Europe from the strictness with which the decrees of councils assembled under a more perfect form of society were preserved by ecclesiastical tradition among rude and lawless nations, for not only is the maintenance of the priestly order, as a separate and superior class, in great measure owing to the authority which could not but be exercised over uncultured minds

* Baluz. *Capit. Reg. Franc.* t. i. coll. 405—414.

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by the professors of so pure and venerable a code, but the gradual infusion of canonical morality into the Teutonic statute-books assumes, during the centuries now before us, an importance not to be concealed. This assertion will be supported by the very slightest comparison of the respective penalties with which the Church and the state at different times visited the more heinous offences. If we were to take the case of homicide, which we adopted to exemplify a similar position in the last section, we should be led from the inhuman regulations of the Salic code, as revised shortly after the accession of Charlemagne, where is laid down with the utmost precision the "Weregilt" varying with the rank of the victim, to a Capitulary of 802*, containing instructions for the "Missi Dominici," where, although the enormity of the crime is represented in strong colours, a pecuniary composition is the assigned punishment, while at the same time the progress of a purer Christian morality is marked by the necessity of penitence before the Bishop in order to a recovery of social privileges. A third and more satisfactory step is to be found among the Capitularies collected by Benedict Levita, where a law, probably to be referred to the later years of Charlemagne, or the earlier ones of his successor, declares death to be the penalty due to murder†. The second as well as the

* Baluz. *Capit. Reg. Franc.* t. i. coll. 371, 2.

† Id. t. i. col. 1079 (*Capit.* [*Kar. et Lud.*] vii. c. 256). [De homicidis ita jussimus observare, ut quicunque ausu temerario alium sine causa occiderit, vitæ periculo feriatur, et pretio nullo

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third of the above steps bear most evident traces of the influence of the clergy in inculcating, by necessarily slow degrees, a true system of Christian ethics.

But the ever more powerful authority exercised by the clergy over public morality may be deduced as well from the external evidence of history as from the contemporary statutes and canons. We have an instance, little satisfactory, it is true, in convincing us of the beneficial effect of exorbitant clerical interference in such cases, but which we may fairly consider as presenting an instance of the abuse of a power which taken by itself, and unperverted by papal influence, cannot have been otherwise than beneficial. I allude to the vigorous theological and political strife raised by the unfortunate marriage of King Lothaire, son to the emperor of the same name, with Theutberga, when an action, which a century before would have passed unnoticed by the most strenuous upholder of the rights of the clergy as interpreters of the Canon Law, was only finally settled by the arbitration of the Pope*.

So far we have confined ourselves to the influence exercised by the clergy as the moral guides and legislators of the people. It was, as has been said, accompanied, and in a great measure produced, by a great increase of strictness in all matters of Church discipline

se redimere unquam valeat. Et si convenerit ut ad compositionem quisque descendat, nullus de parentibus aut amicis eum quicquam adjuvet. Quod si fecerit, suum vuirgildum omnino componat]

* Sismondi, *Hist. des Fr.* t. iii. pp. 143—158.

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and government; and although the student of French history naturally ascribes all the glory of such reforms to the Carlovingian monarchs, yet we must not forget that the clergy and the state stood in a position to act and react upon each other, and that the salutary changes which were carried into execution by the weight of the royal authority had been suggested in the councils of the monarch, and carried through those of the nation, by the preponderating influence of ecclesiastical dignitaries. Remembering this circumstance, we shall look with more interest on the process by which the clergy were restored to so large a share of their former purity, for we shall see in it the consequence of a spirit which had perhaps never been completely extinct even in the most corrupt of churches. The piety of the early Carlovingians had checked the evils of commendator bishoprics and abbeys*, and among the acts of Charlemagne are numerous decrees, ensuring the due performance of their holy functions by the various orders of churchmen. The most remarkable document, perhaps, which is extant on the subject is a general letter† addressed by the same monarch to the archbishops throughout the Empire, in which, after exhorting them to a seemly carefulness in the duties of their sacred office, he questions them concerning their mode of teaching and explaining some of the most important doctrines, as Baptism, the Apostles' Creed,

* Baluz. *Capit. Reg. Franc.* t. i. coll. 169, 170.
† Id. t. i. coll. 483, 4.

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and the various forms acknowledged by the Church for exorcisms and mysterious ceremonies.

But of all the documents relating to the ecclesiastical discipline of the period the most remarkable is the Capitulary of Aix-la-Chapelle, of the year 789*, in which the decrees of the old councils are brought forward again and enforced by the severest penalties. It is true, we can hardly believe that all its numerous provisions were faithfully carried out; yet it affords us strong proofs of the completeness of the reorganization rendered necessary by previous ages of laxity, and of the wise zeal with which the Frank sovereign promoted the interests of his faith. Thus, one clause is to the effect that no bishop is to ordain a candidate without strict previous enquiry into his moral character and intellectual capabilities. Another restrains what seems during the preceding age to have been a common breach of ecclesiastical order, the interference of one prelate with the diocese of his neighbouring brethren: while a third checks the already prevalent tendency towards an immoderate multiplication of the names of martyrs and confessors.

But this amelioration, which appears at first sight as a change consequent upon secular action from without, may be placed in an instructive connexion with another which simultaneously made its appearance among the clergy themselves, and to whose effects we must attribute the most salutary results during the centuries immediately following upon its institution. Chrodegang, bishop of

* Baluz. (*Capit. Aquisgran.* c. 71) t. i. coll. 237, 8.

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Metz, was the first to establish, among the clergy in more immediate intercourse with himself, a rule of life not very much dissimilar to that which had been formed at Hippo by the exertions of Augustine, three centuries before. And he found speedy imitators in all the cathedral churches of the Empire. The model of life established among the secular priesthood of each episcopal seat by this new attempt at combining the practical activity of the priest with the contemplative powers of the monk may be gathered from a clause of the same Capitulary of Aix-la-Chapelle, where, after enjoining upon monks a strict adherence to the vows of their order, the legislator adds the following words: "And we desire that such as enter upon the clerical office, or, as it is termed, the canonical life, should live in every respect according to their own rules, and that their Bishop should regulate their manner of life as an Abbot does that of his monks*." Here then was an institution in every respect admirably adapted to the genius of the age; for it united all the meditative retirement and disciplined life of the monastic orders with all the pastoral power and activity wherein lay the influence of the secular clergy. The priestly influence over the inhabitants of the towns, who during the whole period we are investigating continued to rise into more marked importance

* *Capit. Aquisgran.* c. 71. (Baluz. t. I. col. 238.) ["Similiter qui ad clericatum accedunt, quod nos nominamus canonicam vitam, volumus ut illi canonice secundum suam regulam omnimodis vivant, et Episcopus eorum regat vitam, sicut Abba monachorum.]

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relatively to the agricultural population, was immeasurably enhanced by the regularity of life thus secured; for contrasts of the severe discipline and earnestness of the monks with the comparative laxity and occasional absolute immorality of the secular clergy had been frequent, and had conduced, as we have seen during our last section, to the very considerable social pre-eminence attained by the former over their more worldly brethren.

Hitherto we have confined our attention to the influence of clerical action, direct or indirect, upon the people during the prosperity of the Carlovingian race, and have scarcely cast a glance on the century subsequent to the death of Charles the Bald. And, in truth, of the ten centuries over which we have passed there is none less worthy of our notice; for not only did the clerical body, seduced by the temptations to inordinate ambition consequent on the degradation of all that had been mighty in secular authority, present sure tokens of that gigantic cancer which was wasting the energies of the Church[1], but their degeneracy was relieved by nothing that was noble or praiseworthy among the laity; in fact, it was, as far as we can see, the only period of the world's history in which men so utterly unworthy of their illustrious spiritual ancestry could have attained a power far

[1] Frodoard, writing about 966, complains of "these latter times," in which "deficiente religione" the once numerous clergy of the basilica of SS. Timothy and Apollinaris at Rheims were reduced to a single priest (*Hist. Eccl. Rem.* lib. i. c. 4. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 11; Couvenier, pp. 19, 20).

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superior to what their immediate predecessors had exercised over the minds of their rude barbarian neophytes. But this will be accounted for when we remember the utter helplessness into which every form of government and every branch of society fell during that disastrous age, when we reflect on the change which had come over the dauntless spirit of independence and individual freedom (characteristic, more than any other quality, of the early invaders of the empire,) and which had proved an effectual bar to the excessive political exaltation of the Church among nations so zealously conservative of their pristine institutions. Every incident of ecclesiastical history during the tenth century convinces us that the despotism of the clergy depended rather on the disappearance of all else that was great or venerable than on any absolute moral strength accruing to the Church[1].

[1] Nearly all the letters of Fulk, Hincmar's successor at Rheims, to Pope Formosus, given by Frodoard (*Hist. Ecc. Rem.* lib. iv. cc. 1—3. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 480—490, Couvenier, pp. 571—596) contain lamentable evidence of the utter disorganization of all government and society in France; as in c. 3 (p. 487. Guizot; 592. Couvenier), where he complains of the ravages of the see of Rheims and attacks upon the city by Arnulf of Germany and Eudes count of Paris. However, during this complete absence of legitimate power, it does appear from the correspondence reported in these chapters that the organization of the Church, though irregular compared with what it had been, was far more perfect than any other at the time in the country. Heriveus, Fulk's successor, seems likewise to have distinguished himself by his good government (ibid. c. 11. p. 531. Guizot; p. 645. Couvenier): "Qui mox huic adeo gradui sese exhibere studuit habilem, bonis omnibus præbens amabilem, ipsis etiam senibus

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Indeed, we shall find that the rise of feudalism, while it inspired so much new life into the European nations, tended, previously to the acknowledgment of papal power, rather to weaken sacerdotal influence.

In spite of the fictitious brilliancy imparted to the clerical order, during this its darkest period, by a few men of an intellectual calibre far beyond their contemporaries, the only reason for extolling the general advantages of priestly influence is to be derived from the utter obscurity of the world in which they lived.

We shall now revert from the repulsive spectacle presented by society during the 10th century to the most historically interesting portion of our present section, the reign of Charlemagne. The policy of that mighty sovereign, viewed in the relation as well to the religious as to

imitabilem: benignus amator existens pauperum, largus solator religiosorum, multumque misericors recreator lugentium miserorum: Ecclesiasticis apprime cantilenis eruditus, ac psalmodia præcipuus, et hujus exercitatione limatus, animo vultuque jocundus, suavis atque mitissimus omnique bonitate conspicuus, pater cleri atque totius populi pius patronus; tardus ad irascendum et velox ad miserandum; amator Ecclesiarum Dei, et fortissimus ovilis sibi commissi cum Dei virtute defensor. Recepit denique res diversas et villas Ecclesiæ, quas antecessor suus per precarias sive præstarias diversis contulerat personis. Cui sedula intentione sectanti spiritalia affluenter exuberabant temporalia, quæ ipse honesta dispensabat prudentia, disponens competentibus Episcopium ministerialibus, ipse orationibus incessanter intentus. Replentur igitur Ecclesiæ diversa bonis uberrimis tam hordea quam promptuaria: disponuntur cuncta tum rationabiliter tum misericorditer prædia: sed et quædam reparantur ab eo vel etiam instituuntur municipia."

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the political ideas of his predecessors and successors, seems to us to afford a rare instance of the prevailing tendencies of an age and nation checked, and for a season turned into a new channel, by the activity and administrative talent of a single man. Our present concern, however, is with the clergy, considered not in their political but in their moral and social relations to a prince who undoubtedly exerted over the whole religious ideas of his day an authority unequalled by any succeeding sovereign.

We may look upon the reign of Charlemagne as a sort of parenthesis in the history of the age, for in the political world the prevailing tendency towards a general splitting up of the old barbaric kingdoms into virtually independent duchies and counties was checked for a time by the centralizing influences of his administration, though under his descendants it broke forth again with greater power and more rapid success. In the religious world, again, the ascendancy of priestly authority over the state was for a time restrained by the imposing magnitude and elevated morality of the Frank Empire.

It must, however, be observed that Charlemagne, like all other great administrators, did not so much remodel the ideas of his age to suit the tendencies of his own mind, as follow out to their most legitimate and beneficial conclusions such as already existed; for he combined that commanding genius which necessarily belongs to a great man, with that far-sighted compliance which necessarily belongs to a wise one; so that we

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may in some measure view his influence on the intellect and morality of his age as the most perfect and natural form of the development consequent on the peculiarities of the preceding centuries; and in this we shall be supported by the facts both of his political and his ecclesiastical legislation. The former, though not such as to entitle him to the praises bestowed upon him by Montesquieu, yet presents to us the old Teutonic institutions in their most perfect form[1]; and in the latter, though it may excite the regrets of zealous ecclesiastical historians that the Church was subjected to the authority of a temporal lord[2], we behold a combination of spiritual and civil influences for the good of the nation, which we look for in vain under feebler rulers.

Although in reviewing the vast extent of legislation

[1] "Post susceptum imperiale nomen, cum adverteret multa legibus populi sui deesse, (nam Franci duas habent leges, in plurimis locis valde diversas,) cogitavit quæ deerant addere et discrepantia unire, prava quoque ac perperam prolata corrigere; sed de his nihil aliud ab eo factum est, nisi quod pauca capitula et ea imperfecta legibus addidit. Omnium tamen nationum, quæ sub ejus dominatu erant, jura quæ scripta non erant describere ac literis mandari fecit. Item barbara et antiquissima carmina, quibus veterum regum actus et bella canebantur, scripsit memoriæque mandavit. Inchoavit et grammaticam patrii sermonis. Mensibus etiam juxta propriam linguam vocabula imposuit, cum ante id temporis apud Francos partim latinis partim barbaris nominibus pronuntiarentur" (Einhardi *Vita Karoli M.* c. 29. ap. Pertz, *Mon. Germ. Hist.* Script. t. II. p. 458).

[2] Yet his rough dealings with the Church had been anticipated by Charles Martel (Frodoard, *Hist. Eccl. Rem.* lib. ii. c. 12. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 170—174; Couvenier, pp. 222—4).

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bearing the name of Charlemagne we must attribute much of its profound foresight and policy to the judgment and talent of so great a sovereign; although more, perhaps, than most rulers he may be associated with the acts published during his reign; yet it must also be remembered that he was ever surrounded by all the most erudite and the most pious of his clergy, and that to their sage counsels must be assigned the glory of many of those enactments which posterity refers to their illustrious pupil. While we admire the great results of the fulfilment, in the person of the Teutonic Emperor, of one portion of Plato's wish, if we look with admiration on the philosophic king, we must not forget to give their due meed of praise to the philosophers who swayed an almost kingly power; for the privy council of the Emperor during peace was composed of churchmen, and in a great measure of the same who will come before us again as the ornaments of the Palace School. The absolute form in which the royal decrees were published in France hides from us the fact that many of those Capitularies, which bear all the appearance of having been prompted by a single mind ever devoted to the interests of learning and morality, were little else than formal expressions of decisions arrived at by the assembled ecclesiastical authorities of his realm. We may then with reason assert that the most important part of the moral and intellectual blessings conferred by the clergy on their contemporaries consisted in their influence on the imperial mind; and, consequently, while we give all due praise to the

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head of the state, we must consider that no faintly reflected brilliancy falls on the leaders of the Church who surrounded him.

In examining the influence of Charlemagne's system, we must look upon him not merely as a military conqueror and a political ruler, but in the yet higher character of a *moral* reformer. No sovereign, at any time, not even our own Alfred, seems to have been more completely in advance of the age in which he lived. He saw and felt the ignorance and barbarism in which every one of the nations congregated under his sceptre remained plunged, and the means he adopted for effecting the necessary changes were both the most suitable to his own circumstances and to those of the rude materials on which he had to work. He perceived that no reformation was possible which did not take its rise in the religious feelings of the people, and in which, consequently, the principal place was not occupied by sacerdotal agents.

But, although at his accession the moral improvement and discipline of the priesthood had been considerably advanced by the piety of his predecessor, yet he was far from finding in that body an instrument sufficiently powerful to fulfil his vast schemes for the amelioration of his Empire. Hence the zeal with which he carried on the reform among the clergy which his father had so zealously begun[1]. But his view was not merely directed

[1] Some anecdotes of his mode of appointing bishops are told by the 'Monachus Sangallensis' (*Gesta Karoli*, I. 4, 5. ap. Pertz. II. 732, 733). An ordinance issued by him to all the bishops, that

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towards strengthening the bonds of ecclesiastical discipline, and moulding the whole clergy of his Empire into one compact and united mass; for he saw well that, if no precautions were taken against a recurrence of former evils, the rudeness and demoralization of the social system, checked for a time by his controlling hand, would break forth again with worse violence than ever, and that the clergy, infected by the vices of the laity, would sink once again to its former degraded level. It was with the intention (though the inherent vices of the age baffled even him) of providing against the recurrence of the previous calamities, that he issued those numerous edicts which have been preserved to us, by which the advancement of knowledge and the spread of true religion from one extremity of Europe to the other is materially promoted. Conscious of the intellectual poverty of his own land[1], he induced the learned among the foreign

before a certain day they should all preach in their cathedrals on pain of deprivation, is mentioned by the same authority (i. 18).

[1] "Fatendum tamen ante Carolum M. literarum disciplinarumque in Galliis ita evanuisse studia, ac Linguæ præsertim Latinæ, ut stante Regum nostrorum priorum stemmate, vix sese tantillum extulerit; quod probant, quæ de veteribus formulis supra observavimus, et de Chilperici Regis Latinis seu Barbaro-Latinis scriptis tradit Gregorius Turonensis (*Hist. Franc.* l. VI. c. 46). Id etiam testatur Anonymus Scriptor *De Miraculis S. Florentii* (ex cod. MS.); 'Liberales siquidem artes,' inquit ille, 'usque temporibus Domni Caroli Imperatoris, prædecessoribus nostris ita exstiterant extraneæ, ut in Galliæ regionibus etiam inter summos Pontifices vix aliquis negligentia præpediente reperiretur, qui urbanitate eloquii Synodales saltem valeret venustate exolvere definitiones.

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clergy to flock to the Imperial court, and the chronicles as well as the ordinances of his reign display to us perpetually the anxiety with which, amid all the distractions of civil reform and foreign conquest, he fostered the interests of sound learning[1]. Thus, we are told by his monkish annalists, that on the occasion of his third visit to Rome in the year 787 he collected some of the most erudite among the Italian clergy, and persuaded

Sed quoniam, favente Deo, instantiaque Domni supradicti Imperatoris, quæ vetustiores neglexerant, moderniores adsecuti sunt.' Et Scriptor *Vitæ S. Urbani Lingonensis Ep.* (ex cod. MS.); 'Exterarum quippe persecutio gentium et intestina etiam bella Regum sic postponi fecerant liberalium studia literarum, ut usque ad tempora Caroli Magni vix possent in Galliis inveniri, qui in scientia grammaticæ artis essent sufficienter instructi'" (Ducange, Preface to *Glossary*, c. 30).

[1] A story is told, how his zeal for education was first called out by the arrival of two learned Irishmen, who publicly offered their wisdom for sale, asking as its price "loca tantum oportuna et animos ingeniosos et, sine quibus peregrinatio transigi non potest, alimenta et quibus tegamur," and were eagerly welcomed by the emperor (Monach. Sangal. *Gest. Kar.* I. 1). One of them, it is said, Clemens by name, was entrusted with the education of a large number of boys of all ranks. Charlemagne, on his return from a long expedition, found that the boys from the middle and lower classes had made great progress, while the young nobles had remained idle and ignorant. The former he thanked for their diligence, and promised them bishoprics and monasteries as well as his own personal favour: the latter he scornfully denounced; "Per regem cœlorum! non ego magni pendo nobilitatem et pulchritudinem vestram, licet alii vos admirentur; et hoc proculdubio scitote, quia, nisi cito priorem negligentiam vigilanti studio recuperaveritis, apud Karolum nihil unquam boni acquiretis!" (*ibid.* 2, 3).

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them to accompany him to the north of the Alps*. The consequences of such a step we may gather from an

* See Baluzii *Præfat. ad Const. de Scholis*, t. I. coll. 201, 202. [And Ducange (Preface to *Glossary*, c. 33). "Sic porro in disciplinis sorduit Gallia nostra usque ad tempora Caroli M. 'qui,' ut ait Monachus Egolismensis (' *Vit. Carol. M.* ann. 787,') 'a Roma artis Grammaticæ et computatoriæ magistros secum adduxit in Franciam, et ubique studium literarum expandere jussit. Ante ipsum enim Domnum Regem Carolum in Gallia nullum studium fuerat liberalium artium.' Quod quidem maximi Principis in liberales artes studium ita etiam prædicat Alcuinus in Epistola ad eundem Carolum M. 'Nec fastidiosa segnities legentium benevolentiæ magistri juste deputari debet, si plurimis inclitum vestræ devotionis studium sequentibus forsan Athena nova perficeretur in Francia; imo multo excellentior, quia hæc Christi nobilitata magisterio omnem Academicæ exercitationis superat sapientiam.' (' *Epist.* 10.')

"Et Lupus Abbas Ferrariensis scribens ad Eginhardum; 'Amor literarum ab ipso fere initio pueritiæ mihi est innatus, nec earum, ut nunc a plerisque vocantur, superstitiosa otia fastidio sunt. Et nisi intercessisset inopia præceptorum, et longo situ collapsa priorum studia pene interiissent, largiente Domino meæ aviditati satisfacere potuissem. Siquidem vestra memoria per famosissimum Imperatorem Karolum, cui literæ usque eo deferre debent, ut æternam ei parent memoriam, cœpta revocari, aliquantum quidem extulere caput, satisque constitit, veritate subnixum præclarum dictum, Honos alit artes, et accenduntur omnes ad studia gloria.' (' *Ep.* 1.')"

The cultivation of literature by Charles the Bald is also attested by Hericus the Monk in a letter to that Emperor appended by him to his *Life of St Germanus*. "Ac tandem concludit, 'Quidquid igitur literæ possunt, quidquid assequuntur ingenia, vobis debent.'

" His proinde Principibus, ne quid amplius dicam, sua debent initia scholæ publicæ ac monasticæ, et omnium Disciplinarum in Francia instauratio."]

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edict published towards the close of the same year, entitled* "Constitutio de Scholis per singula episcopia et monasteria instituendis," where, after making mention of communications he had received from monasteries, in which the excellence of the sentiments was more remarkable than the correctness of the language, he ordains that every monastery and cathedral have attached to it a school conducted by men of learning and piety[1], and finally exhorts the clergy to remember that human knowledge is to be looked upon merely as one of the means to the attainment of a religious purity of life. Again, two years later, a clause in the well-known capitulary of Aix-la-Chapelle confirms this general decree by a more specific ordinance in the following terms†: "Scholæ legentium puerorum fiant. Psalmos, notas, cantus, compotum, grammaticam per singula monasteria vel episcopia discant. Sed et libros Catholicos bene emendatos habeant.... Et pueros vestros non sinite eos vel legendo vel scribendo corrumpere." Not content, however, with the ordinary instruction bestowed on the clerical youth, he

* Baluz. *Capit. Reg. Franc.* t. I. coll. 201—4.

[1] So Ekkehard (*Casus S. Galli*, 6. ap. Pertz. ii. 111) writes of the monastery of St Gallen in 937: "Erant disciplinæ loci ut semper et tunc severe, non modo in claustro sed et in scolis exterius: unde etiam præter clericos qui apud nos sæpe nutriti sunt clarissimos ecclesiis variis multoties dedimus et episcopos." "And we enjoin that priests diligently teach youth and educate them in crafts; that they may have ecclesiastical support" (*Canons enacted under King Edgar.* Can. 51. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 400).

† Baluz. t. I. col. 237.

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established schools to promote the higher branches of learning, as we are informed by an edict founding at Osnabrück a seminary for Greek as well as Latin studies*. And in the "Capitula data Presbyteris†," of the same year as the preceding, the amount of knowledge required from ordinary priests is such as to convince us that the educational system produced by the Emperor for the previous twenty years had not been unfruitful of the most noble results[1]. The contemplation of such facts as these may well induce us to hesitate, before we concur with the denunciations of ignorance and barbarism, urged by so many later writers against the clerical body from the fall of Rome to the revival of letters. What we may of more justice complain of is, that, so complete was the separation between the clergy and the laity, that the very men who so zealously promoted learning in their own order seem to have utterly neglected every attempt to impart to their flocks the knowledge they possessed themselves. It is true that Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans under Charlemagne, in his Capitulary which has been preserved to us enjoins‡ his clergy to be ever ready to bestow instruction on all who may seek it at their hands;

* Baluz. t. i. coll. 417—420. † [Ibid. t. i. col. 417.]

[1] The following authorities are cited by Ducange: '*Capit. Car. M.* l. ii. c. 5; *Convent. Aquisgran.* (an. 817) c. 45; *Cap. Theodulf.* c. 20;' &c.

‡ Quoted by Guizot, *Civilisation en France,* leç. 23. t. ii. [pp. 395—397. It is printed in Mansi, *Conc.* xiii. 993—1010, and (anonymously) in Spelman, *Conc. Angl.* i. 584—618. ed. 1639. See Baluz. *Capit. Reg. Franc.* ii. 1229.]

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but such extraordinary intellectual prodigality as this was probably owing entirely to the learned zeal of Theodulf himself, for we have no trace of any statute of the kind in the contemporary public enactments. Indeed, where we speak of the earnestness of Charlemagne in promoting the cause of education, we would be understood to speak solely of clerical education, for it never seems to have occurred to him that the knowledge imparted to himself and his children in the "Schola Palatii" could be shared by any other laymen[1].

[1] Ducange (s. v. *Schola*, vi. 110 *b*) quotes from the '*Capit. Aquisgran.* (c. 45)' a regulation "ut schola in monasterio non habeatur, nisi eorum qui oblati sunt." The "oblati" he elsewhere (s. v. iv. 673 *b*—674 *c*) explains to be those who were dedicated to God in infancy by their parents at some monastery, (sometimes with the ceremony of wrapping the hand in the *palla* of the altar,) and were thereby irrevocably bound to a monastic life. This custom, originating in the 'Rule of St Benedict (c. 59),' called forth many objections: and probably for this reason the same '*Capit. Aquisgran.* (c. 36)' required a confirmation of the involuntary vow on the arrival of years of discretion. See note † p. 131.

Ducange however further mentions certain "*Scholæ Canonicæ*, i. e. Canonicorum; seu, ut aliis placet, in quibus pueri seculares extra claustrum a monachis literis instituebantur." Of Wilfrid bishop of York we are told (Eddi *Vit. Wilf.* 21. ap. Gale, xv *Script.* i. 62) that "Principes seculares viri nobiles filios suos ad erudiendum sibi dederunt, ut aut Deo servirent, si eligerent, aut adultos, si maluissent, Regi armatos commendaret."

To a similar effect are the following Anglo-Saxon '*Ecclesiastical Institutes*': (xix, xx, xxviii. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, pp. 475, 480). "*De scholis in ecclesiis.* If any mass priest desire to put his nephew or any of his relations to learning, at any of the churches which are committed to us in charge, then we will grant that very readily." "*Ut presbyteri per villas scholas habeant et gratis*

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Such were the means by which the influence of those great heads of the Church on their Imperial disciple acted, not only in turning his mind to the nobler pursuits to which as a layman he professed almost exclusive access, but in promoting those clerical reforms which he alone had power to originate. No portion of the private history of the monarch is more interesting to us than that which presents him in constant literary intercourse with such men as Alcuin, Theodulf, Peter Pisanus, Eginhard, Angilbert, and many others, who had been drawn by his unbounded liberality to ornament the Frankish Court. The records we have had handed down to us from the writings of Alcuin, and less authentic sources, of the "Schola Palatii," where the master of so many kings was content to sit, like Constantine at

parvulos doceant. Mass priests ought always to have at their houses a school of disciples, and, if any good man desire to commit his little ones to them for instruction, they ought very gladly to receive them, and kindly teach them. Ye ought to remember that it is written, 'Those who are learned shall shine as the splendour of heaven,' and, 'Those who many men incite to and instruct in learning, shall shine as the stars to eternity.' They ought not however for that instruction to desire anything from their relations, except what they shall be willing to do for them of their own accord." "*Ut sacerdos quilibet modo aliquo plebem doceat.* Also we command those mass priests who are subject to us, that they very earnestly busy themselves about the people's learning: that those who are learned in books frequently and zealously teach their parishioners from these books, who may not be so far learned in books. * * None of you may excuse himself from learning; each of you has a tongue; he, who will say what is good, may always better some one." See also n. 1, p. 202.

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Nicæa, before the feet of those whom his favour had made what they were, place in a most striking light the untiring zeal with which he devoted to the pursuit of science every moment that could be spared from the sterner occupations of the council or the camp[1]. He

[1] "Nec patrio tantum sermone contentus etiam peregrinis linguis ediscendis operam impendit; in quibus latinam ita didicit, ut æque illa ac patria lingua orare sit solitus; græcam vero melius intelligere quam pronuntiare poterat. Adeo quidem facundus erat, ut etiam didascalus appareret. Artes liberales studiosissime coluit, earumque doctores plurimum veneratus magnis adficiebat honoribus. In discenda grammatica Petrum Pisanum diaconum senem audivit, in cæteris disciplinis Albinum cognomento Alcoinum, item diaconem, de Brittania, Saxonici generis hominem, virum undecumque doctissimum, præceptorem habuit; apud quem et rethoricæ et dialecticæ præcipue tamen astronomiæ ediscendæ plurimum et temporis et laboris impertivit. Discebat artem computandi, et intentione sagaci syderum cursus curiosissime mirabatur. Temptabat et scribere, tabulasque et codicellos ad hoc in lecto sub cervicalibus circumferre solebat, ut, cum vacuum tempus esset, manum litteris effingendis adsuesceret; sed parum successit labor præposterus ac sero inchoatus" (Einhardi *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 25. ap. Pertz, *Mon. Germ. Hist.* Script. t. ii. p. 456).

"Grammaticæ doctor constat prælucidus artis;
Nullo unquam fuerat tam clarus tempore lector;
Rethoricæ insignis vegetat præceptor in arte.
Summus apex regum, summus quoque in orbe sophista
Exstat et orator, facundo famine pollens;
Inclyta nam superat præclari dicta Catonis,
Vincit et eloquii magnum dulcedine Marcum,
Atque suis dictis facundus cedit Homerus,
Et priscos superat dialectica in arte magistros.
Quatuor ast alias artes, quæ jure sequuntur,
Discernit simili rerum ratione magistra;

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was ever ready, not only to ascertain how the interests of learning might most satisfactorily be advanced, but to drink deeply himself of the very fountain-head of the abstrusest knowledge. In speaking of the prosperity of the English schools we have alluded to the letters addressed by Alcuin to his royal pupil, discussing the mysteries of the Calendar, and repeating at length the theories of the various ecclesiastical authorities on that complex subject. Lest it should be imagined that these papers were sent to gratify the silly vanity of a superficial pupil, a reply of the Emperor has been preserved among the correspondence of Alcuin, displaying a modest spirit of inquiry as well as a profound acquaintance with those difficult investigations, which reflect the highest credit on the professors of the royal seminary. Another remarkable proof of the spirit of theological and metaphysical research imparted to the sovereign by his courtly teachers is derived from a letter which he dispatched to a few of the leading prelates of his dominions*, entitled

> Doctus in his etiamque modo rex floret eodem.
> Solus iter meruit doctrinæ adipiscier omne;
> Occultas penetrare vias, mysteria cuncta
> Nosse, Deo seriem revelante ab origine rerum.
> Omnem quippe viam doctrinæ invenit, et omnem
> Artis opacum aditum, secretaque clancula verba.
> Omnia solus enim meruit pius ille talenta
> Suscipere, et cunctis præfertur in arte magistris.
> Scilicet imperii ut quantum rex culmine reges
> Excellit, tantum cunctis præponitur arte."

Angilberti *Carmen de Karolo Magno*, iii. 67—87. ap. Pertz. ii. 394.

* *Hist. Lit. de France*, t. iv. p. 400.

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"De gratia septiformis Spiritus;" from which we learn that he had previously called for their opinions on that obscure subject, and had proposed certain questions for their solution. To these inquiries, however, he appears to have received unsatisfactory answers, for he sets himself formally to lay down his own theory on the subject:—a strange occupation, as it may seem to us, for a ruler who ever saw before him so many barbarian tribes to be conquered, and so many semibarbarian ones to be civilized. Further evidence of the almost monkish spirit of erudition animating the swayer of so many sceptres[1] may be found in the Capitulary "De Emendatione Librorum*," published in the year 788, in order to announce to the clergy of his dominions the duty which he had intrusted to Paul the deacon, of compiling a book of extracts from the patristic writings, and at the same time to enjoin on the whole body of the priesthood due care in preserving and emending manuscripts;—an

[1] "Inter cœnandum aut aliquod acroama aut lectorem audiebat. Legebantur ei historiæ et antiquorum res gestæ. Delectabatur et libris sancti Augustini, præcipueque his qui *de Civitate Dei* prætitulati sunt" (Einh. *Vit. Kar. M.* c. 24). "Gloriosissimus itaque Karolus per totum regnum suum studia litterarum florere conspiciens set ad maturitatem patrum præcedentium non pervenire condolens et plus quam mortale laborans, in hanc tediatus vocem erupit: 'O utinam haberem duodecim clericos ita doctos, ut fuerunt Hieronymus et Augustinus!' Ad quod doctissimus Albinus * * respondit: 'Creator cœli et terræ similes illis plures non habuit; et tu vis habere duodecim?'" (Monach. Sangal. *Gest. Kar.* i. 9).

* Baluz. t. i. coll. 203—6.

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exhortation which he confirms in the following terms by his own example: "Ad pernoscenda studia liberalium artium nostro etiam quos possumus invitamus exemplo. Inter quæ jampridem universos veteris ac novi instrumenti libros, librariorum imperitia depravatos, Deo nos in omnibus adjuvante examussim correximus."

But the theologians of the court might lay claim to be the teachers and advisers of the Emperor in matters of a very different importance than the nomenclature of the Calendar, or the doubtful orthography of a reviving literature: as Charlemagne beheld in them the most influential moral instruments by which to turn the hearts of his subjects from the darkness of semi-Pagan observances to the enlightened precepts of a more rational faith, so they with reason saw in the conqueror of Germany and Lombardy, the martial patron of the Holy See, a man specially raised up by Providence to prepare the way for the reception of the truth among nations by whom it had never yet been heard[1]. Nor can it be doubted that the conquering hosts of the Franks were far more effective in the conversion of central Europe than could have been the most self-denying of missionaries, or the most undoubtedly miraculous of Italian

[1] Pepin, in like manner, "legationem ad Waifarium Aquitanicum principem mittens, petens ei per legatos suos, ut res ecclesiarum de regno ipsius, quæ in Aquitania sitæ erant, redderet, et sub immunitatis nomine, sicut ab antea fuerant, conservatas esse deberent, et judices ac exactores in supradictas res ecclesiarum, quod a longo tempore factum non fuerat, mittere non deberet" (4th cont. of Fredegarii *Chron.* c. 124).

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relics; and we may believe that the efforts even of a Boniface would have been productive of but scanty results, had not the Saxons and the Frisons learnt to place an implicit confidence in the faith which claimed their attention supported by so many thousand victorious spears[1].

But the same men, who instilled into the Imperial mind the theoretical doctrines of Christianity during peace, did not fail to remind him of the necessity of practising them amid the intoxication of barbarian war.

[1] "Hinc statuit requies illis ut nulla daretur,
Donec gentili ritu cultuque relicto
Christicole fierent, aut delerentur in ævum.
O pietas benedicta Dei, quæ vult genus omne
Humanum fieri salvum, quia noverat hujus
Non aliter gentis molliri pectora posse,
Disceret ut cervix reflectere dura rigorem
Ingenitum, mitique jugo se subdere Christi.
Ob hoc doctorem talem fideique magistrum,
Scilicet insignem Carolum, donavit eisdem,
Qui bello premeret quos non ratione domaret,
Sicque vel invitos salvari cogeret ipsos.
Hoc inspiratum cordi divinitus ejus
Utile consilium comitantur strenua facta."

Poeta Saxo ap. Pertz, *Mon. Germ. Hist.* Script. t. i. p. 231.

An anticipation of the same policy by Carloman, in one of the campaigns against the Saxons, seems to be hinted at in the following account:—"Evoluto triennio iterum Carlomannus confinium Saxonum ipsis rebellantibus cum exercitu inrupit; ibique captis habitatoribus, qui suo regno adfines esse videbantur, absque belli discrimine feliciter adquisivit, et plurimi eorum Christo duce baptismi sacramento consecrati fuerunt" (3rd cont. of Fredegarii *Chron.* c. 113).

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There remains, for example, among the voluminous correspondence of Alcuin a letter to his master on the occasion of a victory over the Huns*, exhorting him to let a diffusion of the benefits of the Gospel, with a due but not indiscriminate attention to the sacraments of the Church, follow closely after the horrors of bloodshed; while at the same time he warns him against unseasonably testing the sincerity of so rapid a conversion by the ill-judged exaction of the tithes. Again, in another communication† he entreats the conqueror not to risk the loss of the newly converted Saxon nation by oppressing them with unwonted ecclesiastical burdens; while in a third‡ he does not scruple to deter him from a projected expedition to Beneventum. Such examples as the above are sufficient to prove to us how perpetually present with the Emperor was the influence of those clerical advisers who were the constant companions of his leisure moments.

But, on the whole, we may draw a parallel between the social position of the clergy under the Anglo-Saxon constitution and under the sway of the Frank Emperor, and assert that in one situation, as in the other, the high moral authority possessed by the clergy depended in no small measure on the limitations of temporal power to which they were subjected; for Charlemagne, willingly though he submitted to clerical teaching so long as it consorted with his preconceived schemes of policy, never

* *Ep.* 28. † *Ep.* 80.

‡ *Ep.* 105.

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condescended to bow, as his successors did, before the assumptions of his subjects, and from the commanding height, at which he was placed by the peculiarities of his birth and of his aspiring genius, he obtained such an authority over every member of the clerical body throughout the European Continent as no other sovereign can hope to rival[1]. But he was far too astute a master of his craft to be ignorant that in dealing with all men, but most of all with the spiritual lords of mankind, apparent or unimportant concessions are almost ever the price paid for real and substantial power, and we may rest assured that, by enrolling himself as the one layman worthy of being initiated into those mysteries of which the clergy were the exclusive interpreters, he rendered them more compliant to commands which seemed to come from one of themselves. While the impress of constant intercourse with the clergy was stamped on every action of his life and on each of his great reforming schemes, he at the same time acquired over those who had been, and were destined once more to become, the most intractable of subjects a power which for a feebler hand to grasp at would have been certain ruin.

If it should appear that we have employed an inordinate portion of our space in detailing the results of sacerdotal influence on the character of Charlemagne, as an individual, and as a sovereign, it must be remembered that of all the monarchs, whom the pages of history lay

[1] He is called "episcoporum episcopo" by his monkish S. Gallen biographer (*Gest. Kar.* i. 25. ap. Pertz. ii. 742).

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before us, he wielded over the minds of his subjects the most absolute and extended sway; and that he, more than any other master-spirit of the centuries we have examined, may be looked upon as the representative of his age; so that whatever results, whether for good or for evil, priestly intercourse produced in him, may be said to have been transferred, in bolder and more enduring lineaments, to the nations which owned his commands.

If, instead of continuing our survey of the general moral action of the clergy through the century of turmoil and gloom with which our appointed cycle closes, and endeavouring to discover in that universally corrupt age anything beyond the mere shadow of former glory and the yet powerful influence of old tradition, we turn to the records of monasticism, we shall find much that is characteristic in its progress and in its influence on the literature and arts of Europe, not only during the more prosperous age of Charlemagne but even during the melancholy period which witnessed the fall of his Empire.

We have already investigated the consequences on the monastic establishments throughout Europe, more especially in our own island, of the reformed Benedictine Rule. We have seen a change take place in the system, which raised the religious houses from being nurseries of indolence and false humanity to no mean position in effecting the moral and intellectual improvement of mankind. But at a time when the polluting influences of the world without were so numerous, when a higher prize was

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open to clerical ambition than any preceding age had presented to it, we can scarcely be surprised if the consequences of the changes we have mentioned disappeared along with the pristine vigor of secular society. The very superiority attained by the monks above their brethren was in a measure the cause of their moral debasement; for the desire universally felt by the prelates at the first rise of a purer monasticism to maintain their sway over so important an instrument of religious influence led to a prolonged contest between the regular and secular clergy, which, although it appeared to be terminated by a peaceable fusion of the two conflicting orders, had nevertheless introduced a worldly spirit into the cloisters, which all the exertions of succeeding disciplinarians failed permanently to remove. In the frequent struggles which took place between the bishops and the monks, when the former claimed an authority always unprecedented and often tyrannical in the extreme, the latter were reduced to desert the retirement of the sacred walls, in order to enter a less congenial field, and appeal to the royal authority for that protection which could come from no other quarter[1]; so that the barriers which had so long separated them from the world were broken down, and secular passions usurped the place of religious fervor and theologic erudition. The rapacity and sacri-

[1] See, for instance, the account of the struggle between the monastery of S. Gallen and the bishops of Constance, finally decided by the intervention of Lewis, in Ratpert's *Casus S. Galli* (ap. Pertz. ii. 63—69).

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legious violence which, if we may believe Roman Catholic historians, sit so heavy on the soul of Charles Martel, and which surrendered once flourishing religious houses to the pleasures of barbarian owners, may convince us that their inmates had lost all the moral grandeur which had so long rendered them secure against all perils from the world without. The reforms enunciated by the decrees of Charlemagne were during his life carried out with all the vigor of his energetic administration, but it was reserved for the efforts of an ecclesiastical enthusiast finally to establish monasticism in the form which it maintained without any great variation during the middle ages.

As the tendency which led originally to monastic organization is represented by Benedict of Monte Cassino, so that which conduced to its reorganization comes before us in the person of Benedict of Anianum. The position of this remarkable man relatively to the institutions which preceded and succeeded him in France so strongly resembles that of his illustrious namesake, that, among his countrymen at least, he may dispute with him the patriarchal honors. But in one important respect his fame must ever fall far short of that of his great prototype, that, whereas the latter supplied a want universally felt, and legislated for the entire Western world, the former was confined in his influence to France alone, for the religious houses of that country had long been sunk far below those of all neighbouring lands. The power displayed by the monasteries and schools of

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England*, and which became only too fatally apparent under the intriguing guidance of Dunstan[1], was very different from the inanition of similar bodies in France under the later Carlovingians[2]. And Italy, we are assured, retained some share at least of its early intellectual supremacy.

* See Ingulph's description of Croyland Abbey, quoted by Maitland, *Dark Ages*, p. 304.

[1] The *Historia Ingulphi* (Gale, *Rer. Angl. Scr.* i. 38—50) describes at some length the means taken (in 974) to strengthen and then improve Croyland by the Abbot Turketul, who had been Chancellor to Athelstan, Edmund the Elder, and Edred: "Confirmato itaque Monasterio suo et contra omnes adversarios tam pontificali quam regali auctoritate sufficienter suffulto et fortissimo effecto, venerabilis pater Abbas noster Turketulus jam senior ætate plenusque dierum deinceps in seculum non exibat; sed inter seniores Monasterii quotidie conversatus de statu et observantiis antiqui Monasterii inquirere et audire summopere affectabat." Some of these elders, "quatenus suis posteris tam memoranda de monumentis veteris monasterii quam de regularibus observantiis ejus studiose contraderent, instantissima vigilantia deprecatus est. Ediderunt tunc illi seniores historiam illam," &c. "Quo etiam tempore venerabilis pater noster Abbas Turketulus, antiquis observantiis veteris monasterii Croylandensis plenius auditis examinatis et integre intellectis, statuit et decrevit subsequentia in suo Croylandensi monasterio perpetuis temporibus inviolabiliter ab omnibus observanda." Then follows an account of his reforms. "Hæc sanctissima statuta sua...Turketulus, in suo capitulo publice promulgata et ab omnibus acclamata et obedientissime acceptata, fecit scribi et in fine regulæ sancti Benedicti jussit apponi, ut omnes cum vellent valerent legem suam legere et ne contingeret aliquem per ignorantiam contraire."

[2] The subsequent corruption of monasticism in England is thus attested by the Anglo-Saxon *Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical* (c. xiv. ap. Thorpe, *Anc. Laws*, p. 431): "It is truly an evil, as may be supposed, that some [monks] are too arrogant,

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To these causes must be referred the fact that the reforms of the Second Benedict, however great they might appear to his contemporaries among his own countrymen, have never raised him to any distinction approaching to that which posterity has conferred on the former of his order. And yet it cannot be denied that to his activity and earnestness must be attributed that impetus received by the religious principle in France which subsequently developed itself in accordance with the opinions of the age in the formation of the great houses of Clugni and Citeaux. His efforts were not confined merely to the organization of individual establishments, for he lent his advice and name to the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, held under Louis le Débonnaire in the year 817, the decrees

and altogether too proud, and too widely erratic, and too useless, and altogether too idle in every good deed, and with regard to an evil deed in secret profligacy, inwardly heartless and outwardly indignant. And some are apostates, who ought, if they would, to be God's soldiers within their minsters; such are those who have cast off their flocks, and who continue in worldly affairs with sins. It alas goeth ill altogether too widely. So greatly doth it widely become worse among men, that those men in orders, who through fear of God were whilom the most useful and most laborious in divine ministry and in bookcraft, are now almost everywhere the most useless, and never labour strenuously on anything needful before God or before the world; but do all for lust and for ease, and love gluttony and vain pleasure, stroll and wander, and all day trifle and talk and jest, and do nothing useful. That is a hateful life that they so lead; it is also the worse, that the superiors do not amend it, nor some conduct themselves so well as they should; but it is our duty to amend it, as we most diligently may, and to be unanimous for the common need, before God and before the world."

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of which, published among the French Capitularies*, may be considered as the official rule of the reformed Benedictines. But the difference between the two sets of regulations is enough to prove to us how completely the idea of the monastic life had degenerated, and had settled down into an unalterable, cold, dull formalism, than which no other spirit could have dictated, in an assembly of divines and statesmen, an edict which proposed to accomplish the great object of succouring perilled religion by defining the size and material of monkish hoods, the weight of monkish loaves, and the propriety or impropriety of violating ascetic vows by the occasional consumption of a forbidden fowl. However, it must be confessed that even this extreme of narrowmindedness, fatal as its effects afterwards proved, did, in as far as it consolidated the monastic system, materially conduce to the benefits derived by succeeding ages from that system, even in its most degraded form. For every one who rejoices in the transmission to our own days of the remains of classical or theological learning must look upon it as a peculiarly providential circumstance that the severity of asceticism to which we owe their preservation should have been restored, and the inmates of the cloister more than ever separated from the world without, before the unheard-of disasters of the tenth century began. For during that troubled period many a landmark which had withstood the fury of an Attila and an Alaric was

* Baluz. t. i. coll. 579—590. *Cap. Aquisgran. de Vita et Conversatione Monachorum.*

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swept away by the less merciful marauders, whom Scandinavia, Italy, Africa, and Spain sent forth to carry fire and sword to every extremity of Christendom[1]. The Gothic hordes had turned away with superstitious awe from the Christian fanes, and soon ceased to devastate lands of which they looked upon themselves as the rightful owners; but the Norman and Saracen bands attacked with peculiar ferocity the asylums of that faith which to them was associated with all that they had suffered from the religious zeal of Charlemagne; and they yearly carried back to their northern homes the spoils of the devoted south. Amid such perils as these, before the towns of Central Europe were fortified, and before the strongholds of feudalism had arisen throughout the country, the monastic buildings alone seemed capable of offering any resistance to the fury of the invaders. Although the walls reared by the piety of former generations often succumbed to the rage of the idolaters, and we read of the utter desolation of such renowned establishments as St Germain's * and Croyland[2], yet in general

[1] The islands of the Italian coast seem to have been occupied by monks as in the days of S. Augustine: for under the year 807 we read, in Einhard's *Annales* (Pertz. i. 194), of the destruction of the Moorish pirates by Count Burchard, which they themselves confessed had been inflicted upon them "eo quod anno superiore contra omnem justitiam de Patelaria insula sexaginta monachos asportatos in Hispania vendiderunt, quorum aliqui per liberalitatem imperatoris iterum ad sua loca reversi sunt."

* Sismondi, *Hist. des Fr.* t. iii. p. 139.

[2] For a description of the Danish sack of Croyland see the *Hist. Ingulph.* ap. Gale, *Rer. Ang. Scr.* i. 21—24.

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the monks, protected either by the accumulated treasures, which they so freely disbursed as ransoms, or by the unyielding masonry of their cloisters, enjoyed an immunity from desolation to which the other ranks of society were strangers; and at this period, more strictly than during the first inroad of the Germanic nations, did monasticism accomplish its great work of preserving in the minds of a few men, and transmitting to succeeding generations, the genius and religion of days whose spirit had been so long extinct.

In discussing the zeal for learning which clerical influence had powerfully tended to promote in the mind of Charlemagne, we alluded to the great monastic schools which throughout every portion of his vast empire rose and flourished at his command. The successes of his armies were not more closely followed by the proclamation of the Gospel than by the foundation of great educational establishments. The monasteries of Fulda and Osnabrück transmitted to after times monuments and supporters of theological erudition, the most satisfactory proof of the conquest of central Germany by the Imperial arms, and the renowned schools established at Reichenau, Hirschau, and St Gallen might well look back upon the sovereign of the Franks as the originator of monastic learning to the east of the Rhine.

The intellectual results of Charlemagne's reign appear to us to be, in one respect at least, deserving of even greater attention than those which accrued to Europe from his political administration, inasmuch as they

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continued to make themselves felt long after all the other glories of his reign were preserved only in distorted fables or exaggerated romances. For, during the melancholy days which witnessed the demolition of the edifice raised by so much toil and genius, the powers of the cloister and the schools seem to have sunk far less rapidly than the more historical energies of the council and the camp[1]. Such a conclusion could, perhaps, with difficulty be drawn from the records of French literature and science; since it appears that the death of the Emperor was very closely followed by revolutions in the realms of mind as well as in those of matter[2], which transferred the more lasting results of his policy and the true heritage of his mighty name to the east of the

[1] The following notice of the educational labors of S. Notger or Nodker, bishop of Liege from 971 to 1008, is given incidentally by Ducange (s. v. *Scholares*) from a life of the saint. "Quanta fuerit Notgero in educandis pueris scholaribusque disciplinis instruendis sollicitudo, hinc probatur, quod semper, dum in via pergeret, longe seu prope, scholares adolescentes secum ducebat, qui uni ex Capellanis suis sub arctissima parerent disciplina; quibus etiam librorum copiam cum cæteris scholaribus utensilibus circumferri faciebat."

[2] After describing the rapid decline of Latinity *previous to* Charlemagne, Ducange thus continues (Preface to *Glossary*, c. 27): "Ac si aliquantulum revixit Caroli Magni cura et industria rursumque instaurata est, haud diu id sane stetit, bellis civilibus inter Ludovici Pii filios flagrantibus universamque deinde Franciam Normannis invadentibus et depopulantibus. Ita enim siluit inter arma Latina lingua; siluere vel potius exstinctæ penitus fuere disciplinæ omnes, et si quid ex iis superfuit clericos ac monachos fere tantum spectavit, quos ad ea servanda studia adstrinxit ecclesiastici ordinis professio."

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Rhine, to that German nation which yet looks back to him as the most illustrious of her sovereigns. The Benedictine historians of French literature, in recounting the intellectual glories of the tenth century*, are compelled to assign the palm of excellence to the renowned religious houses we have above enumerated, crowded as they yet continued to be with willing scholars, and fertile of the results of Imperial patronage. France, it is true, though left far behind in the race, was yet by no means destitute of those intellectual trophies of which the preceding century had been so prolific, and in the monasteries of Corbey, St Germain, and Tours the lamp of learning still burned, though with a feeble and flickering light.

But throughout the whole of the tenth century it is apparent that such among the clergy as made any progress in the humanizing arts were, in France, but lights amid an almost universally prevailing darkness. The general ignorance of the clergy was only equalled by their gross neglect of the holiest duties of their office and the strictest requirements of ancient discipline†. However, the ponderous tomes which have come down to us bearing the name of Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims[1], may lead us to believe that even the busiest and most intriguing priest, in an age when intrigue and the priesthood were inseparable, could find time to bestow on the interests

* *Hist. Lit. de France*, t. iv. p. 448.

† Id. t. vi. pp. 1—17.

[1] See Frodoard, *Chron.* lib. iii. *passim.*

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of literature and divinity; indeed the phrase, "furatis horulis a diversis occupationum distensionibus*," which he uses in describing the composition of his work on predestination, implies an ardor in the cause of learning, which in a more propitious age might have led to the most noble results.

The latter half of the century, however, presents to our notice in the monasteries of France two illustrious names, whose distinction has no small weight in softening the severe judgment which posterity has passed on the general ignorance of their country, Abbo, Abbot of Fleuri, and his more famous successor in the same monastery† and in the pursuit of the same sciences, Gerbert, who afterwards occupied the papal chair as Sylvester II. The latter, with whom closes the intellectual history of the centuries through which we have passed, presents to us a rare combination of vast scientific and theologic acquirements with political talents which raised him ultimately to the highest pinnacle of clerical ambition. The learned distinction he attained may alone incline us to hesitate in believing the accounts which so many historians have given of the excessive darkness of his age[1].

* Id. t. v. p. 554. Life of Hincmar.

† Though it does not appear that Gerbert taught permanently at Fleuri, yet it was undoubtedly one of the schools to which he imparted the Arab science he had acquired.

[1] Hincmar's letter to pope Nicholas (Frodoard, *Hist. Ecc. Rem.* lib. iii. c. 14. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 300, 301; Couvenier, p. 376) against Gottschalk bears sufficient testimony to the learning of the accused. And Hincmar's successor Fulk restored at

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His writings, though to us unknown beyond the mere titles, exercised a powerful influence over the intellectual world of his day, and that mathematical lore which he had drawn from the Arab schools of Cordova, and which established his fame as a magician among the ignorant laity of his time, was, as we may be well assured, not thrown away on his clerical contemporaries*. But to the historical student he is chiefly known, not as the restorer of geometrical or arithmetical skill, nor as the voluminous theological writer, but as the first to call attention to the desolation of the Holy Land by the Saracens, and to direct the eyes of the rising chivalry of Europe to the conquest of the East. Thus with him fitly closes the ecclesiastical history of these early days of national development, since we may reasonably look upon him as stationed at the very commencement of that great era of the Crusades, the most characteristic portion of mediæval history.

If from the continental countries we turn to our own island, we shall meet with a prospect which, though never illuminated by such splendid talents as those which gave

Rheims two almost ruined schools, one for the canons of the place and the other for the clergy of the neighbourhood, and sent for Remigius of Auxerre to teach the liberal arts (ibid. lib. iv. c. 9. p. 528. Guizot; p. 642. Couvenier). Seulf, a pupil of Remigius and likewise a bishop of Rheims, is described as sufficiently instructed in the ecclesiastical and secular sciences (ibid. c. 18, p. 538. Guizot; p. 654. Couvenier).

* See the elaborate life of Gerbert in the *Hist. Lit. de France*, t. vi. p. 559.

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so much lustre to the age of Charlemagne, is at the same time free from the gloomy and revolting features so prominent in France during the tenth century[1]. The whole literary history of England during the period preceding the Norman Conquest leads us to believe that the wide distinction between the intellectual acquirements of the clergy and the laity, which we have remarked as checking the full influence of the Church on the Continent, existed to a far more limited degree among our Anglo-Saxon progenitors, though that it existed to a certain extent appears from the popular suspicion of unlawful science which attached to Dunstan as it did to his great contemporary Gerbert[2]. The greater closeness of the intellectual bond uniting the two orders of society may be inferred from the circumstance that the Anglo-Saxon clergy, not content with making use of a dead language to express their thoughts, whether in the graver matters of ecclesiastical discipline or in their literary performances, brought into frequent requisition the language of the common people[3]. This is perhaps only one of the remote conse-

[1] In 984 Egelric, abbot of Croyland after Turtekul, gave "communi bibliothecæ claustralium monachorum magna volumina diversorum doctorum originalia numero quadraginta, minora vero volumina de diversis tractatibus et historiis, quæ numerum centenarium excedebant" (*Hist. Ing.* ap. Gale, *Rer. Ang. Scr.* i. 53).

[2] See Ducange's account (Preface to his *Glossary*, c. 32) of the depressed state of literature in England, owing to Danish invasions, till restored by the exertions of Dunstan and Ethelwold.

[3] "Et quidem omnes, qui Latinam linguam lectionis usu didicerunt, etiam hæc [sc. fidem catholicam, quæ apostolorum symbolo continetur, et Dominicam orationem] optime didicisse certissimum

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quences of that radical difference between the social position of the English and the Continental clergy to which we have already referred. It would have been vain to expect any great results from the intellectual action on the laity of France or Germany of a priesthood who looked upon the tongue of their ancestors as a barbarian idiom, incapable of expressing those great moral or theological truths which they laboured to disseminate among their clerical brethren alone. In England there was no such difficulty to be overcome, and the laity could there find no difficulty in understanding the Anglo-Saxon poetry of Aldhelm, or the numerous translations which they owed to the literary zeal of their greatest sovereign; indeed, if the clergy had kept the key of knowledge in their own hand, we can hardly imagine why so distin-

est; sed idiotas, hoc est, eos qui propriæ tantum linguæ notitiam habent, hæc ipsa sua lingua dicere ac sedulo decantare facito. Quod non solum de laicis, id est, in populari adhuc vita constitutis, verum etiam de clericis sive monachis, qui Latinæ sunt linguæ expertes, fieri oportet. Sic enim fit ut cœtus omnis fidelium quomodo fidelis esse, qua se firmitate credendi contra immundorum spirituum certamina munire atque armare debeat discat; sic ut chorus omnis Deo supplicantium quid maxime a divina clementia quæri oporteat agnoscat. Propter quod et ipse multis sæpe sacerdotibus idiotis hæc utraque, et symbolum videlicet et Dominicam orationem, in linguam Anglorum translatam obtuli." Bede, *Ep. ad Ecgbert.* 6. Later it would appear that priests sometimes knew only the language of the laity: "It behoves us bishops that we disclose to you priests in the English tongue the divine doctrine which our canon prescribes to us, and which also the book of Christ teaches us; because ye cannot all understand the Latin" (Ælfric, *Past. Ep.* i. ap. Thorpe. *Anc. Laws*, p. 452).

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guished a scholar as King Alfred should have considered it not beneath him to turn the works of Boethius, Orosius, Bede, and Gregory into a language not a whit more accessible to his clerical subjects than the original Latin. On the whole, we find that the remark we have already made as to the more healthy influence exerted over the Anglo-Saxon nation by their spiritual teachers in matters political holds equally good in matters intellectual; as in the former they amalgamated freely with the other members of the state, and tacitly ruled without domineering, so in the latter they diffused, as far as with such imperfect means of communication they could, the blessings of the knowledge they possessed through every order of society, from King Alfred, who rejoiced no less than Charlemagne in the company of his learned bishops, to the literary ladies whom Aldhelm* did not think it beneath his dignity to instruct by his treatise "De Laude Virginitatis."

But before we conclude our investigation of their moral and intellectual action, we must say a few words concerning that æsthetic influence of the clergy which must be attributed to them as patrons and restorers of art even during those years of destroying Vandalism. We have spoken of the blessings conferred on the barbarian nations by the monkish restorers of agriculture and all that is most practically useful in society; less important, but not less unquestionable, is the revival within the sheltering walls of so many religious houses

* See Wright, *Anglo-Saxon Lit. Biog.* pp. 32, 33.

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of all that is most ornamental in life. It is far from our intention to dilate on the course of events during earlier ages to which we owe the preservation of some of the noblest edifices of classical genius, especially within the walls of the Eternal City, or to explain the steps by which it came to pass that the monuments long admired by men of a more elevated taste, by being incorporated within the possessions of the Church, were handed down to superstitious imitation in an age when all power of original invention in art, as in every other province of the mind, had disappeared. But the time to which our attention has lately been directed was that in which church architecture, in our sense of the word, took its rise; and if to the efforts of one class of men more than another is to be referred so noble a result, we must assign the palm to the clergy, and more particularly to the monastic orders.

We cannot read of the vast extent of the cœnobitic establishments of the Benedictine order without perceiving that architecture must have found in them a far more extensive field than it could have done in the most splendid abodes of secular pomp. A remarkable instance both of the lavish expenditure bestowed on the monastic edifices and of the almost superstitious reverence, with which in those days, as in our own, the relics of Roman art were cherished, occurs in the history of Benedict Biscop, the founder of the Wearmouth monastery[1]. We

[1] "Nec plus quam unius anni spatio post fundatum monasterium interjecto Benedictus oceano transmisso Gallias petens

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read of his visiting Rome soon after the completion of his building, and returning "enriched with countless articles of ecclesiastical furniture, with numerous copies, to wit, of the sacred books[1], as well as pictures exhibiting the concordance of the Old and New Testaments."*[2]

cæmentarios, qui lapideam sibi ecclesiam juxta Romanorum quem semper amabat morem facerent, postulavit, accepit, attulit. * * Proximante autem ad perfectum opere, misit legatarios Galliam, qui vitri factores (artifices videlicet) Britanniis eatenus incognitos ad cancellandas ecclesiæ porticuumque et cœnaculorum ejus fenestras adducerent. Factumque est; venerunt: nec solum opus postulatum compleverunt, sed et Anglorum ex eo gentem hujusmodi artificium nosse ac discere fecerunt; artificium nimirum vel lampadis ecclesiæ claustris vel vasorum multifariis usibus non ignobiliter aptum. Sed et cuncta quæ ad altaris et ecclesiæ ministerium competebant vasa sancta vel vestimenta, quia domi invenire non potuit, de transmarinis regionibus advectare religiosus emtor curabat." Bede, *Hist. Abb. Wiremuth.* 5.

[1] See p. 154.

* Mabillon, *Acta Sanctorum Ord. S. Ben.* t. i. p. 545. [From Bede, *ibid.* 9. See next note.]

[2] On his fifth voyage to Rome, he brought back (Bede, *ibid.* 6) "picturas imaginum sanctarum quas ad ornandum ecclesiam beati Petri Apostoli quam construxerat detulit; imaginem videlicet beatæ Dei Genetricis semperque virginis Mariæ, simul et duodecim Apostolorum, quibus mediam ejusdem ecclesiæ testudinem ducto a pariete ad parietem tabulato præcingeret; imagines evangelicæ historiæ, quibus australem ecclesiæ parietem decoraret; imagines visionum Apocalypsis beati Johannis, quibus septentrionalem æque parietem ornaret, quatenus intrantes ecclesiam omnes etiam literarum ignari, quaquaversum intenderent, vel semper amabilem Christi sanctorumque ejus quamvis in imagine contemplarentur aspectum, vel Dominicæ incarnationis gratiam vigilantiore mente recolerent, vel extremi discrimen examinis quasi coram oculis habentes districtius se ipsi examinare meminissent." Bede

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Another yet more striking example of the union of activity in the cause of religion with zeal for the erection and embellishment of the houses of God is presented to us in the life of Wilfred, Bishop of York at the close of the seventh century, and one of the most renowned patrons of ecclesiastical art among the Anglo-Saxons*. His cathedral he is said to have repaired, and to have filled the windows with glass, a substance previously unknown to his countrymen[1]. Moreover, the descriptions of the churches at Ripon[2] and

(*ibid.* 9) thus describes the pictures brought back for both monasteries on Benedict's sixth visit: "Nam et tunc dominicæ historiæ picturas, quibus totam beatæ Dei Genetricis quam in monasterio majore fecerat ecclesiam in gyro coronaret, adtulit: imagines quoque ad ornandum monasterium ecclesiamque beati Pauli Apostoli de concordia veteris et novi Testamenti summa ratione compositas exhibuit; verbi gratia, Isaac ligna quibus immolaretur portantem et Dominum crucem in qua pateretur æque portantem proxima super invicem regione pictura conjunxit. Item serpenti in eremo a Moyse exaltato Filium Hominis in cruce exaltatum comparavit." From the description of Benedict Biscop's church, and especially of its pictorial decoration, we have every reason to conclude that the style he employed was Byzantine. Compare Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. pp. 92, 102.

* Wright, *Anglo-Saxon Lit. Biog.* p. 175.

[1] "Primum culmina corrupta tecti renovans, artificiose plumbo puro tegens, per fenestras introitum avium et imbrium vitio prohibuit, per quod tamen intro lumen radiebat. Parietes quoque lavans secundum Prophetam *super nivem dealbavit*, eam enim non solum domum Dei et altare in varia supellectili vasorum intus ornavit, verum etiam deforis multa territoria pro Deo adeptus terrenis opibus paupertatem auferens copiose ditavit." Eddi Stephani *Vita Wilfridi*, c. 16. ap. Gale, *XV Scriptores*, i. 59.

[2] "Beatissimus Wilfridus Episcopus thalamum veri sponsi et

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Hexham[1], the latter of which is said by the biographer of Wilfred to have been superior to anything north of the Alps, display to us the progress made by the love of art among the clergy, even at so great a distance from Rome, whence were derived many of the outward ceremonies as well as the doctrines of religion[2]. Again, the historian

sponsæ, in conspectu populorum corde credentium et fide confitentium, auro et argento purpuraque varia mirifice decoravit: nam in Hrypis basilicam polito lapide a fundamentis in terra usque ad summum ædificatam variis columnis et porticibus suffultam in altum erexit et consummavit. * * Quatuor Evangelia de auro purissimo in membranis depurpuratis coloratis pro animæ suæ remedio scribere jussit; necnon et bibliothecam librorum eorum omnem de auro purissimo et gemmis pretiosissimis fabrefactam compaginare inclusores gemmarum præcepit." Eddi *Vit. Wilf.* 17.

[1] "Cujus profunditatem in terra cum domibus mirifice politis lapidibus fundatam, et super terram multiplicem domum, columnis variis et porticibus multis suffultam, mirabilique longitudine et altitudine murorum ornatam, et variis linearum anfractibus viarum aliquando sursum aliquando deorsum per cochleas circumductam, —non est meæ parvitatis hoc sermone explicare quod sanctus ipse Præsul animarum a spiritu Dei doctus opere facere excogitavit: neque ullam domum aliam citra Alpes montes talem ædificatam audivimus. Porro beatæ memoriæ adhuc vivens gratia Domini Acca Episcopus, qui magnalia ornamenta hujus multiplicis domus de auro et argento lapidibusque pretiosis; et quomodo altaria purpura et serico induta decoravit quis ad explanandum sufficere poterat?" Eddi, *Vit. Wilf.* 22. Compare Bede, *H. E.* v. 20.

[2] In 710, Naiton king of the Picts, wrting to Ceolfrid abbot of Wearmouth, "architectos sibi mitti petiit, qui juxta morem Romanorum ecclesiam de lapide in gente ipsius facerent, promittens hanc in honorem beati Apostolorum principis dedicandam; se quoque ipsum cum suis omnibus morem sanctæ Romanæ et apostolicæ ecclesiæ semper imitaturum, in quantum duntaxat tam

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of the Benedictine order has given an elaborate description of the great abbey of Jumiéges on the Seine, founded by Filibert in the year 615; from which we may conclude that the architectural display of the exterior and the lavish magnificence of the interior were scarcely surpassed by the astonishing erections of a later date. It was natural that architecture, the most practical of the arts, should first rise to eminence in a rude society, and that the monks, accustomed as they were to occupy edifices of surpassing size and magnificence, should have been the designers of so many ornaments of a succeeding age. But it was hardly to have been anticipated that painting was to owe its revival to the spirit of mediæval asceticism. Yet that such was the case is attested beyond a doubt to us by the purely religious subjects of the earliest works preserved to our own day; and if we look back farther still, we shall find the origin of the art in the clumsy but characteristic devices with which the early monks decorated the Bible and the missal. The third art which naturally associated itself with the monastic life was that of music, which had indeed at all times and in all countries been looked upon as an almost necessary part of a clerical education. We have seen it obtaining for one of its zealous patrons the praise of Sidonius Apollinaris in a preceding century[1], and it reached in consequence of the spread of religious houses

longe a Romanorum loquela et natione segregati hunc ediscere potuissent." Bede, *H. E.* v. 21.

[1] See p. 73.

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a far greater perfection in the age now before us[1]. Notker, a monk of St Gallen, and a distinguished theological writer under Louis le Débonnaire*, is said to have made himself remarkable among his contemporaries by his proficiency in sacred music, and to have composed a scientific treatise on the subject[2]. And we may believe that he was not

[1] In England we hear of James the deacon at York (Bede, *H. E.* ii. 20), Æddi Stephen at York (iv. 2; see also Eddi Stephani *Vit. Wilfridi*, c. 14, where he is associated with Æona), Putta at Rochester (*ibid.*), John, abbot of St Martin's, at Bishopwearmouth (iv. 18), and Acca and Maban at Hexham (v. 20), as actively engaged in diffusing a knowledge of Roman church music through the country round them. Of John it is said (Bede, *l. c.*): "Non solum autem Johannes ipsius monasterii fratres docebat, verum de omnibus pene ejusdem provinciæ monasteriis ad audiendum eum qui cantandi erant periti confluebant. Sed et ipsum per loca in quibus doceret multi invitare curabant." See also Bede, *Vita Abb. Wiremuth.* 6. Wilfrid bishop of York, when rebutting the charges of his enemies by the recital of his own services, mentions (Eddi *Vit. Wilf.* 45) "quomodo juxta ritum primitivæ Ecclesiæ consono vocis modulamine binis adstantibus choris persultare [Ultra-Umbrensem gentem] responsoriis antiphonisque reciprocis instruerem." Heriveus bishop of Rheims in the tenth century is praised for his skill in church music as well as his excellent administration of his see (Frodoard, *Hist. Ec. Rem.* lib. iv. c. 11. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 531; Couvenier, p. 645).

* See the *Hist. Litt. de Fr.* t. VI. p. 134.

[2] Notker, Ratpert, and Turtilo are mentioned together by Ekkehard (*Casus S. Galli.* 3. ap. Pertz. ii. 94—101) as pupils of Marcellus, an Irish monk settled at St Gallen, "qui in divinis æque potens et humanis septem liberales eos duxit ad artes, maxime autem ad musicam." Turtilo "erat eloquens, voce clarus, celaturæ elegans et picturæ artifex, musicus sicut et socii ejus sed in omni genere fidium et fistularum præ omnibus. Nam et filios nobilium in loco ab abbatede stinato in fidibus edocuit. * *

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alone in devoting himself to an art which, while in its simpler stage it adapts itself to the most uneducated society, assumed under clerical influence so important a place in the training which the Church bestowed upon her ministers[1].

So it is that, as we examine one after another of the innumerable means by which the civilization of the human race may be advanced, and nations raised from a savage state to the full exercise of those talents which it is one of the noblest objects of life to develop, we discover that they were without a single exception in the hands of the priestly order. And though, in the gentler arts as in the severer studies, we must ever regret that for so many centuries the knowledge and cultivation which was turned freely to the profit of the Church should have been denied to the laity, yet we ought not on that account to refuse due praise to those men who by exerting the faculties of research and application, of which the cloister is so successful a nurse, handed down through an unbroken

Sed inter hæc omnia, quod præ aliis est, in choro strenuus, in latebris erat lacrimosus; versus et melodias facere præpotens." "Quæ autem Turtilo dictaverat, singularis et agnoscibilis melodie sunt, quia per psalterium seu per rothtam, qua potentior ipse erat, neumata inventa dulciora sunt, ut apparet in *Hodie cantandus* et *Omnium virtutum gemmis*, quos quidem tropos ad offerendam quam ipse rex fecerat Karolus obtulit canendos."

[1] On the efforts of Charlemagne to reform Church music in France, by means of instruction from Rome, see the 'Monach. Sangallensis,' *Gest. Kar.* i. 10. (Also Ekkehard, *Casus S. Galli*, 3. ap. Pertz. ii. 102.) Among his favourites was an "incomparabilis clericus," who excelled every one in his knowledge "cantilene

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intellectual series those acquirements whose final enjoyment was reserved for the laity of a more fortunate era[1].

ecclesiasticæ vel jocularis, novaque carminum compositione vel modulatione, insuper et vocis dulcissima plenitudine inæstimabilique delectatione" (*ibid.* i. 33). Overhearing the ambassadors from the Greek emperor chanting, he ordered his clerks to taste nothing till they had presented to him the same antiphones "in Latinum conversas. Inde est, quod omnes ejusdem sunt toni, et quod in una ipsarum pro '*contrivit*' '*conteruit*' positum invenitur. Adduxerunt etiam idem missi omne genus organorum, set et variarum rerum secum. Quæ cuncta, ab opificibus sagacissimi Karoli quasi dissimulanter aspecta, accurratissime sunt in opus conversa, et præcipue illud musicorum organum præstantissimum, quod, doliis ex ære conflatis follibusque taurinis per fistulas æreas mire perflantibus, rugitum quidem tonitrui boatu, garrulitatem vero lyræ vel cymbali dulcedine coæquabat" (*ibid.* ii. 7).

[1] "Of the Anglo-Saxon husbandry we may remark that Domesday Survey gives us some indications that the cultivation of the Church lands was much superior to that of any order of society. They have much less wood upon them, and less common of pasture; and what they had appears often in smaller and more irregular pieces: while their meadow was more abundant, and in more numerous distributions" (Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 528, ed. 1823. App. iv. c. 1). "Some of the clergy, as we advance to the age preceding the Norman Conquest, appear to us as labouring to excel in the mechanical arts. Dunstan, besides being competent to draw and paint the patterns for a lady's robe, was also a smith, and worked on all the metals. Among other labors of his industry, he made two great bells for the church at Abingdon, &c. He also displayed much art in the fabrication of a large silver table of curious workmanship. Stigand, the bishop of Winchester, made two images and a crucifix, and gilt and placed them in the cathedral of his diocese. One of our kings made a monk, who was a skilful goldsmith, an abbot" (vol. iii. pp. 109, 110, book vii. c. 11). Then follow references to the various enactments enjoining handicrafts on the clergy.

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We must now turn to the last and, it must be added, the least grateful branch of our subject; which brings before our notice such political benefits as accrued to the world from the action of the clergy during the ninth and tenth centuries. We speak of it as the least grateful portion of our subject, inasmuch as during no equal period since the first propagation of the Gospel does the Church appear to have lost so much of its pristine integrity from contact with an unrighteous world. Yet it was not the first age of wide and deep moral pollution which had afflicted our race since the ministers of the faith had been elevated to temporal influences but they had passed comparatively unhurt through all the evils of the decaying society at Rome, because they had not then learned that intimate combination with the state which they subsequently acquired from the intrigues and the ambition of barbarian courts. But, little as we can find to look upon with satisfaction in the clerical power as exerted during the miseries of the tenth century, we may turn with less regret to the milder influence which, guided by the master hand of Charlemagne, they exercised over his vast dominions. So sagacious a ruler as the Frank emperor could not fail to perceive that, although nations long strangers to each other had been united in apparent unanimity under a common sceptre, and though the ample frame of his territories might under the impulse of a master mind put forth its colossal strength, yet it contained within itself no merely political principle of adhesion sufficiently powerful to counterbalance the

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constant tendency to a rapid dismemberment. But he beheld the daily progress of another power, working with a mystery which only increased its sphere of action, and containing in its very essence those ideas of union elsewhere so completely wanting. He saw that, while the secular constitutions throughout his dominions differed as widely as the climates under which they had been framed, the clergy alone were actuated in every land by fixed motives and lived under the same time-honored code, acknowledging the absolute supremacy of a single chief. Accordingly, while in his intercourse with the sacerdotal order he laid before himself as his principal object the moral amelioration of his people, we may find in the acts of his reign abundant evidence that he considered them also as destined to effect a political change. Acting as they ever did in willing compliance with the decrees of one who knew so well how to humble himself in order to rise to more unfettered authority, they carried out, as far as in them lay, this mighty scheme by which the whole Teutonic conquests were to be permanently united under a single temporal and a single spiritual head.

But to investigate minutely the various points of clerical action on the civil government would be in a great measure to repeat what we have already stated as to the development of the old Roman customs into permanent enactments throughout Western Europe. The authority, for example, of the "Missi Dominici" under the Frank emperor, one of whom was invariably a prelate, presents to our view merely the old spiritual prerogative

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in the exercise of which a ruler of the Church might exclude an unjust magistrate from all participation in the sacred ordinances; with this important addition however, that instead of swaying a purely ecclesiastical power, and punishing by the terrors of spiritual condemnation, the bishops of Charlemagne were authorized to call down on offenders all the weight of Imperial vengeance[1].

[1] "Eo anno [802] demoravit domnus Cæsar Carolus apud Aquis palatium quietus cum Francis sine hoste; sed recordatus misericordiæ suæ de pauperibus, qui in regno suo erant et justitias suas pleniter abere non poterant, noluit de infra palatio pauperiores vassos suos transmittere ad justitias faciendum propter munera, sed elegit in regno suo archiepiscopos et reliquos episcopos et abbates cum ducibus et comitibus, qui jam opus non abebant super innocentes munera accipere, et ipsos misit per universum regnum suum; ut ecclesiis viduis et orfanis et pauperibus et cuncto populo justitiam facerent. Et mense Octimbrio congregavit universalem synodum in jam nominato loco, et ibi fecit episcopos [episcopis?] cum presbyteris seu diaconibus relegi universos canones, quos sanctus synodus recepit, et decreta pontificum, et pleniter jussit eos tradi coram omnibus episcopis presbyteris et diaconibus. Similiter in ipso synodo congregavit omnes abbates et monachos, qui ibi aderant et ipsi inter se conventum faciebant, et legerunt regulam sancti patris Benedicti, et eum tradiderunt sapientes in conspectu abbatum et monachorum; et tunc jussio ejus generaliter super omnes episcopos abbates presbyteros diacones seu universo clero facta est, ut unusquisque in loco suo juxta constitutionem sanctorum patrum, sive in episcopatibus seu in monasteriis aut per universas sanctas ecclesias, ut canonici juxta canones viverent, et quicquid in clero aut in populo de culpis aut de negligentiis apparuerit, juxta canonum auctoritatem emendassent; et quicquid in monasteriis seu in monachis contra regulam sancti Benedicti factum fuisset, hoc ipsud juxta ipsam regulam sancti

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Something akin to this institution has already been observed among the Visigoths; and indeed it may in general be asserted that we have in the forms of government, whether civil or ecclesiastical, as carried into execution under Charlemagne, little else than the most fully developed and practical results of those old Germanic customs which we have witnessed in every part of the Western Empire[1].

The history of the ensuing century, however, was destined to afford a melancholy example of a system of state policy, for a time so prolific of beneficial results, perverted at last in feeble hands, and conducing by its progressive degeneracy to the utter ruin of every civil and religious interest which it had been its former glory

Benedicti emendare fecissent" (*Annales Laureshamenses* ap. Pertz, i. 38, 39). See also the account of Charlemagne's clerical *Missi Dominici* "ad recti judicia determinanda" given by Frodoard in speaking of bishop Wulfar (*Hist. Eccl. Rem.* lib. ii. c. 18. ap. Guizot, *Coll. des Mém.* v. 189, 190; Couvenier, pp. 244, 245). "Vulfarius * * sicut et alii quidam sapientes et Deum timentes habebantur Abbates per omnem Galliam et Germaniam a præfato Imperatore delegati, quo diligenter inquirerent, qualiter Episcopi, Abbates, Comites, et Abbatissæ per singulos pagos agerent, qualem concordiam et amicitiam ad invicem tenerent, et ut bonos et idoneos Vicedomnos et Advocatos haberent, et undecunque necesse fuisset tam regias quam Ecclesiarum Dei justitias, viduarum quoque et orphanorum sed et ceterorum hominum, inquirerent et perficerent, et quodcunque emendandum esset emendare studerent in quantum melius potuissent, et quod emendare per se nequivissent in præsentiam Imperatoris adduci facerent, et de his omnibus eidem principi fideliter renunciare studerent."

[1] See p. 196, note 1.

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to protect. The last glance moreover, which at the close of our subject we cast on the clerical body in its relations to the state, shows to us only too clearly that the evils on which we have been compelled to look were but the harbingers of long ages of degradation, when the priesthood, perverted by the fatal temptations of ecclesiastical sway and the influence of a materialized religion, united itself ever more and more with the secular spirit, instead of imparting to an erring world the benefits of practical Christianity.

In conclusion, after following the progress of the clergy through so many ages and in so many shifting scenes, after witnessing its ultimate victory over the shocks of persecution, the seductions of a false philosophy, and the debasing intercourse with a barbarian world, we are irresistibly led to a more assured confidence in the high perfections of our divine faith. It is impossible not to be taught even by the most gloomy of the many troublous centuries which have passed before us, that no mere human failings, universal though they may be, can check the fulfilment of that mighty scheme by which the very imperfections of the means used are made to redound to the good of man and the glory of his Maker.

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